AN APOLOGY

FOR THE

LAWS Ecclesiastical ESTABLISHED,

That command our Publick exercise in

RELIGION;

AND,

A serious Enquiry, whether

PENALTIES

Be reasonably determined against

RECUSANCY.

By *WILLIAM STARKET*, D.D.
Rector of *Pulham* in *Norfolk*.

LONDON.

Printed by *T. R.* for *Henry Brome* at the *Gun* in
West end of St. *Pauls Church*, 1675.

TO THE

Right Reverend Father in GOD,

PETER,

Lord Biſhop of

ELY.

My LORD,

THere be two Idols ſet up among our Brain-ſick People, which muſt be broken down, *viz.* LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE and TOLERATION. Under the Name and Colour of the firſt, many ſet up their miſled Perſwaſion for a Law, and ſo ſin without poſſibility of any ſenſe of *Guilt* or *Conviction.*

Secondly, Under the Name of Gospel *meekness*, *gentleness* and *peaceableness*, they cry up *TOLERATION* and *IMPUNITY*, and so are without fear to add sin to sin, when in no danger of a subsequent punishment.

These, if suffered and countenanced, will in time overthrow *RELIGION* and *GOVERNMENT*, which are the pillars and support of *Order* and *Peace*, both in Church and Kingdom.

To encounter and remove these two great obstacles of our *Happiness*, my design hath been in this little Treatise to assert and prove two things; 1. *That there must be just Laws established in every Society, to limit the* Conscience *of the Christian and Rational man, and that whosoever transgresseth those Laws is guilty of sin, notwithstanding any plea of Conscience, which can give no license for any man to sin.* 2. *That* Punishments, *by Gospel Rules, are necessarily inflicted upon obstinate Offenders, and that* Toleration *and* Impunity *are of dangerous consequence to our King, Church, and whole Nation.*

The Reasons are many that induced me to dedicate these weak Meditations to Your protection, my good *Pious Lord*, as that I might lay hold on the first opportunity of manifesting that just Observance Your *worth* and

and *dignity*, as well as your *favour*, have challenged and extracted from me. And, because honoured with the Title of being Your *Son*, I accounted my self in duty obliged to give you some assurance of the soundness of my *Judgment*, and stedfastness of my *Faith* and *Conscience*, firmly assenting and adhering to the right exercise of the best Religion, and the best Government under Heaven, which must tend not only to my own credit, but Your content and satisfaction. And my Ambition is to give Testimony of some resemblance to be in me to such a Father, whose zeal and ability to defend the *Church* and *Government* is eminently known to a great part of the World. And verily, it is but common prudence for my own security to provide such a Patron as You are, to assist me in defending a Noble Argument, which though full of *Truth*, *Loyalty* and *Necessity*, fit to be published, yet in probability can no sooner be drawn out but it must expect to meet with much opposition.

Yet this gives me encouragement, that while under your Banners though I expect many Gainsayers, yet I can fear no Confuters. If I should fall it will be honourably, yet I dare promise my self to come off victoriously. And under Your conduct I cannot but

but assume fresh Courage, if called upon farther, to maintain the *Faith* of the Gospel, the *uniform Worship* of God, the *Government* both in Laws and Penalties justly fixed and executed against *Recusancy*, which will certainly advance the *order*, *peace* and *welfare* of our whole Society.

My prayers and endeavours are intent upon these things, and so long as I continue stedfast in those Designs and Attempts, I hope You will not account me unworthy to profess my self, as the Churches, so

Your Lordships most obedient Son,

and

Humble Servant,

W. STARKEY.

Four PROPOSITIONS offered to Conſideration.

I. *The Laws of our* Engliſh *Government, that command every Believing Subjects Uniformity in the publick exerciſe of Religion, are eſtabliſhed according to the Law of Nature, and Rules of the Goſpel.*

II. *The wilful Omiſſion, or Recuſancy, of any Baptized Subjects Conformity to ſuch Laws, is an open Sin, and a dangerous Diſobedience.*

III. *The threatning and determining of Puniſhments, to be inflicted upon wilful Tranſgreſſors of ſuch Laws, are according to the dictates of Human Reaſon, and the conſtant practice of the Church of God.*

IV. *The inflicting of Puniſhments, as determined, is juſt and neceſſary for the ſafety and welfare of our Nation.*

Propo-

Propoſition I. Chap. I.

Governours are to be appointed over every Believing Society, by the Laws of Nature and Rules of the Goſpel, and our Governours are ſo appointed eſpecially.

Section,

I. *What is conceived muſt be meant by the Law of Nature.*

II. *What we are to underſtand by the Rules of the Goſpel.*

III. *By both theſe, Governours are to be appointed over every Believing Society.*

IV. *Our Governours are thus appointed over us eſpecially.*

A Serious Apology FOR THE LAWS Eſtabliſht in the Exerciſe of RELIGION.

SECT. I.

1. GOD Almighty, who of his infinite wiſdom, in decent and comely ſort hath ſweetly ordered and diſpoſed all his works in number, meaſure, and weight, hath given to every of them a principle, form and meaſure of working to moderate and limit their force and power, fit, ſuitable and correſpondent to their deſigned end to ſome Canon, Rule, or Law; A *Law* which they cannot paſs naturally, but moving by that Law according to their ſeveral conditions they may come to that acquieſcency and content, that may render them happy according to their ſeveral capacities.

If they be *Inanimate Creatures*, that move unwittingly, and yet conſtantly, as the *Heavens* and *Elements*. *The* Sun *knoweth its riſing, and the* Moon *its going down:* The *Stars* keep their courſes, the *Orbes* their Rotations, according to Gods Ordinance or Decree they all move, as the Divine wiſdom orders them.

If they be *Animate Creatures*, that have, though weak, yet ſome underſtanding, they move from the moſt perfect principle they have, to ſeek their content and ſatisfaction; To gratifie their *ſenſes* is their utmoſt aim.

And if they be *voluntary Agents*, that clearly apprehend what they do, yet kept they are as inclined in one conſtant tenure and courſe of working, according to the eſtabliſhment of Natures law. And this innate obedience to the *law of Nature*, as God hath ordered, is the ſtay, the ballaſt of the whole World, that Gods Creatures cannot naturally or ordinarily do otherwiſe, than to ſhew themſelves apt and inclineable to this innate Obedience.

Now *MAN*, that hath a *Rational* and *immortal Soul*, and ſo a more noble Principle, and hath more excellent endowments and perfections than the reſt of *viſible Creatures*, muſt aim at nobler Ends, attainable by thoſe *faculties* and *abilities* with which God of his goodneſs hath extraordinarily bleſt him. So, that to gratifie the *ſenſe* cannot be his utmoſt aim, but to content the *Spirit*, which is attainable by *light* of *Reaſon*, and her improvements, directing him to thoſe Actions that may conduct and lead him the readieſt way to

the

the enjoying that *Happineſs* which is intended.

So that *Man* acts moſt naturally when he acts moſt rationally; when, by that noble principle of humane actions, his *Spirit*, he inquires, ſearcheth, diſcerneth, judgeth and elects fit and ſuitable Means directly tending to that ultimate End, *viz.* his *content* and *acquieſcency*, unto which he aſpires and inclines. So the *Spirit* of Man is the *Candle* of the Lord ſet up in his Superiour part, to direct Mans goings in the *night* of this World, and *to guide his feet in the way of peace.* So, upon diſcurſive Reaſoning, to chooſe and approve of the moſt plain way, and moſt direct means, to conduct him to his deſigned end of *content*, muſt be granted to be the *Nature of Man.*

And the Laws of *Mens Natures* are the reſults and laſt concluſions of the *Spirits* practical Reaſoning. The dictates of the *Intellective part* prudentially limiting, directing and ordering mans Actions, as they moſt probably move in a ſtreight tendency to their ultimate End, are the *Laws of Nature* in Men. Now *Man* is to conſider himſelf in a double reſpect, privately, ſingly or diſtinct from company, and rationally is to mind his actions for his particular *peace*; or publickly, as intereſſed in humane Society, and to order things rationally for its *general good.*

For internal, ſecret Actions, that tend to every ſingle mans particular *content*, a mans own *Reaſon* may be ſupream Judge, and give Laws and Rules for his direction. In ſuch caſes we allow every man the judgment of his own *Diſcretion.* But for

open and external Action in our Converſations, as relating to *Society*, for regulating them every man is not a competent Judge. That's Natural, *Quod convenit cum natura ſociali & rationali.* It's natural for Man related to a *Society*, to ſubmit to the juſt determinations of his *Governours*, whoſe wiſdom knows to order what is beſt and moſt conducing to *Publick peace*, which by reaſon in this laſt Circumſtance he is bound to preſerve and maintain. And yet, then alſo private Men move naturally in a direct tendency to their own particular happineſs, when they diſcharge thoſe duties of *Charity* and *Kindneſs* that preſerve peace to their Neighbours, to which they are obliged; and they by it create a content and delight in their own *Spirits* which naturally muſt be ſatisfied.

They erre dangerouſly that think, and ſay, *That becauſe they have a Law from their* Reaſon, *within their ſelves, for their own private and ſecret Opinions, that their own Reaſon may give directions for publick Actions that concern their Neighbours.*

The Laws therefore of Mans nature, that direct mens external Actions to promote the peace and welfare of *Humane ſociety*, are not Mens private particular Judgments, but Governours ſober and deliberate determinations.

For if every Mans particular Judgment were his natural Law in *Publick* Concerns, what could be expected, but from different and contrary Judgments, there would be different and contrary Affections and Actions, a renting into Diviſions and Diſſenſions, and an irreparable breach there would

be

be of *peace*, which is the main end of *Government* and *Society*.

So that if *Subjects* will move naturally and rationally in a ſetled Society, they are to account the juſt and ſober Conſtitutions of their wiſe *Governours* to be the Laws of their Natures to direct them for Peace, to which they are bound naturally to conform. *Juſt Conſtitutions*, I ſay. For neither power, greatneſs nor multitude, countenancing or maintaining diſordered Actions, can make them natural to men, but only their conſonancy to Reaſon, and tendency to a good End. And ſo it is not, what hath been done, or what is generally done through *ſenſe*, *paſſion* or *cuſtome*; but, what ought, may and hath been done upon ſober, deliberate *Reaſon*, is to be accounted natural to man.

And, if we conſider, we muſt acknowledge that very oft *prejudice*, *education*, *paſſion*, *cuſtome* and *intereſt*, hath perverted the Reaſon of *Governours*, but theſe things ought not to be thrown as a reproach upon *Humane Nature*. He ſaies true that ſaies, *Hony is ſweet*, though ſick men think it not ſo. It is not to be reputed the *Nature* of men, but *corruption* of Nature, when numbers of men chooſe or determine any thing *impious* or *unjuſt*. It is not *Humane Reaſon*, but the *depravation* of it that dictates and concludes practically of any thing that is *filthy* or *diſhoneſt*. For they act not rationally that erect not proper means, nor humanely that fix not in a right end, that is, the *publick good* of the Community in which they are intereſſed and concerned.

From our *paper Hectors* and *whifflers* for *Humane Reason*, although I hear much of the noise, I can see very little of the thing in them; For not aiming at the end of *Society* they cease to be *humane*, and not choosing the Means and Rules to the *End*, which is the right ordering of publick Actions, they cease to be rational and prudential.

So the dictates and conclusions of the sober discursive Reason of *Governours*, deliberately directing and choosing fit means to compass the designed End of *Societies* peace and full content, are to be concluded the Laws of *Mens Nature* in relation to their Societies, by *Governours* to be established, and by *Subjects* naturally to be submitted unto.

And thus also we must determine, if we will considerately be directed by the Rules of the Gospel.

SECT.

SECT. II.

2. GOD, who made *Man*, of his free Grace, the perfecteſt of all vitible Creatures, and capable of greater Happineſs, hath given him greater endowment and ability by which that *Happineſs* might be attainable. And therefore hath ordered and placed the *Intellective faculty*, as the *Sun*, in the heavenly part of that Microcoſme, by whoſe clear dictates, as ſo many radiant emanations of light, Man may walk ſafely and guide himſelf. But, by the unlucky interpoſition of *Earthly delight*, *Senſe*, *Paſſion* or *Cuſtome*, this glorious Light of Heaven, from time to time, hath ſuffered Eclipſes; and Men too frequently, like Beaſts in a Wilderneſs, have wandred out of the Way, and have found no full content to reſt in.

But evident it is, Our Gracious God, who knew not to take off utterly his Loving kindneſs from man, nor ſuffered his Care of him to fail, out of a tender regard to his ſafety, hath, at ſundry times and in divers manners, given Men the light of his *Word*, and hath openly from time to time declared, *That he would have* Man *come to the knowledge of Truth and be ſaved.* And therefore he, who out of his great love, *ſpake to our Fathers by his Prophets, hath in theſe laſt daies ſpoken to us by his Son*, whom he ſent from his boſom to reveal this good Will of his, to transform Mankind by *renewing the Spirits of their minds, while they approved the good and acceptable Will of God*; and this is rightly called the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

So, the *Will* of God in this laſt diſpenſation, revealed and publiſhed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, is that which we underſtand by the Goſpel; and this is no more than the good News of a *poſſible Happineſs* for Man, and the Rules to be obſerved by which that Happineſs is attainable.

Now this, I humbly conceive, is the beſt and moſt warrantable Notion we can have of the Goſpel, *That it is a form of Government which Chriſt hath left to the World, for thoſe that would be of his Church and People, That by agreement of ſubmiſſion to thoſe Rules preſcribed, a Company of faithful Profeſſors might perfectly joyn themſelves together into a comfortable Society and Communion.*

For Man is ζῶον πολιτικὸν, a Creature given to *Society*, fitted by nature, and by his ingenious diſpoſition is inclined to it. Now every Company or Society which is neceſſary for the well-being of Man, muſt, for that end, have a frame of Polity, a model of Government from juſt Laws, deliberately agreed upon, and wiſely conſtituted and ſet over it. And theſe things which are in every wiſe Government, are eminently conſpicuous in the Goſpel, which is undoubtedly the beſt frame of Government in the World.

So were thoſe Inſpired Authors perſwaded, that wrote the *Canonical Epiſtles* to the ſeveral Churches after Chriſts Aſcenſion, and 'tis clearly apparent in that profound Epiſtle written to the *Hebrews at Jeruſalem.* For at that time when that Epiſtle was written, there were two famous Governments that ſtood in Competition for *precedence* in that place; *The Old Law, or* Jewiſh *Polity, delivered*

livered by Moſes *to the* Iſraelites; *and the New Law, which is the Goſpel given by* Chriſt *unto Believers.* And our Holy Author in that Epiſtle, makes it his buſineſs to prove, *That the Goſpel delivered by Chriſt was juſtly to be preferred before the Law, delivered by* Moſes; *and that, as Chriſt, ſo did his Goſpel in all things deſerve the preheminence.*

The *Church* then is a Society of the Faithful, and the *Goſpel* is to be looked upon as the model of Government which Chriſt left his Church. Every Believer then muſt not only look on the Priviledges and Mercies, promiſed and exhibited in the Goſpel, as the ground of his confidence; but on the Laws enjoyned in the Goſpel, as juſt and wiſe Rules, directive of his obedience. And we cannot but obſerve, that the Promiſes of the Goſpel are not abſolute but conditional, upon our Faith and Obedience to the Rules preſcribed, *if we love him and keep his Commandments.* Which, till we do heed and obſerve, we will be too favourable to the ſpawn of the *Gnoſticks*, thoſe Libertines that multiply and thrive in the midſt of us, who looking on the Goſpel as a Promiſe of *Mercy*, and not as a Rule of *Duty*, turn the *Grace of God into wantonneſs*, and *continue in ſin* ſecurely, *becauſe Grace abounds*, which *God forbid.* When *Chriſt is the Author of eternal Salvation to all them that obey the Goſpel*, Heb. 5. 9. *And they that walk according to this Rule*, they may look for that *mercy* and *peace* which is promiſed to the *Iſrael of God.* Gal. 6.

So the *Will* of God under this laſt diſpenſation manifeſted and publiſhed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles,

is,

is, that which we underſtand by the Goſpel.

Now of things thus manifeſted ſome are *ſupernatural*, great myſteries of Godlineſs, that *Angels deſired to* peep *into*, thoſe perſpicacious intelligences were glad to behold; Things the Wiſe men of *this World* did not know, *fleſh* and *blood* could not diſcover, but contrived they were by the manifold wiſdom of God, and publiſhed of his infinite goodneſs by his Son, who hath kept nothing ſecret of the Counſel of his Will, but hath declared what is neceſſary for us and our Salvation. And unto theſe Objects, *Supernatural*, we are to make our application by Faith and Hope. And from the Objects, I ſuppoſe, our applying our ſelves by believing and relying on them, are called and accounted *ſupernatural* alſo. Although certainly, we have reaſon enough to aſſent to theſe things as true, and rely on them, and rejoyce in them as good, which our gracious God, who is truth and cannot lye, of infallible veracity hath clearly manifeſted by his Son, and his immenſe goodneſs inclined him, to reveal by him what he ſaw was neceſſary for our Salvation, and we are to apply our ſelves in reaſon to them accordingly.

But ſome things are *Natural*, ſuch as by diſquiſition of Reaſon may be diſcerned and concluded; as, That *God, the firſt infinite Being, is a Spirit*, that *he is but One, and to be worſhipped, &c.* That *our Neighbour is to be loved, edified, comforted, and what we would that others, &c.* And *Chriſt came not to deſtroy this Law, but to fulfil it.*

Theſe Rules, *Natural* and *Rational*, are afreſh eſtabliſhed by Chriſt in his laſt diſpenſation, and by

a new publication revived for Morality, and mens comfortable Converſations. Theſe are reaſonably called *the Rules of the Goſpel.*

Now the Goſpel, as well as our Treatiſe, reſpects not only *ſingle perſons* but *Societies*, and ſeveral directions are given by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, for ordering mens Converſations in Societies for publick good.

To ſhew that Governours by theſe Rules muſt be appointed over Societies, is the next conſiderable.

SECT. III.

3. NO ſooner could Mankind multiply unto that number that might admit of *Society* or *Communion*, but had they continued in a ſtate of *Innocence*, Superiority and Inferiority, Dominion and Subjection would have been found amongſt them.

Adam, the firſt Father of all Mankind, from priority of Nature and Exiſtence, from power, wiſdom and experience that was eminently in him, from the protection his Poſterity had from him, and their dependance upon him, had been abſolute Monarch, Ruler and Judge over all that deſcended from him. And with this Authority of Rule *Cain* was inveſted, when *Abels* deſires were to be towards him, and *Cain* was to Rule over him. And when in every Family there is a Guide, one Father,

Father, one Maſter to be honoured and obeyed. That in many Families united in Society there ſhould be one ſupream Moderator to Rule, is natural and neceſſary.

And that cannot be unlawful among Men on Earth, which God hath revealed to be among the Angels in Heaven, where there are *Thrones*, *Principalities*, *Powers* and *Dominions*. The higheſt in the Order ruling ſubordinately under God, without Tyrannical inſulting, and the loweſt Subject, without murmuring or oppoſing. *Regere & Regi neceſſarium eſt*, To Govern and be Governed is neceſſary and natural. Neither *beauty* nor *being* of this Glorious Univerſe could ſubſiſt or continue without Order, unleſs ſome part did Rule and ſome Obey, unleſs one were Chief to Command others that belong to it.

Conſider that the God of *Nature* hath thus ordered every thing. In our *Bodies*, One head over the members; In our *Souls*, One underſtanding over the other faculties. In the *viſible Heavens*, One Sun in the Firmament over all the Stars. Over the whole ſyſteme of Creatures, Heaven and Earth, viſible and inviſible, One *G O D* ruleth over all.

2. And if no Superiority were ſetled over a Company aſſociated by Heirſhip or Deſcent, of neceſſity there muſt be *Rulers* elected and *Judges* appointed to determine Controverſies, and preſerve Peace, without which the happineſs and welfare of the Society could never be promoted. For if every mans Opinion or Will were ſuffered arbitrarily to be his Law, when every man from the pride of his

his heart, and ambition of Precedence, is inclined pertinaciously to adhere, and unyieldingly to maintain his mis-led Perswasion, and is prone by all means to bring others to submit unto him. If none were appointed (whose *wisdom* were not to be doubted, nor *goodness* nor *justice* suspected, nor *Authority* to be opposed or gainsayed) by whose determination, judgment and order, the People were to abide by, what could follow from *Contrariety* of Perswasions but *divisions*, what could succeed but a *dissolution* of that Peace and Unity which is the sure wall of defence, to support and maintain the whole superstructure of additional Comforts, which are necessary for the welfare of the whole Society, what can be expected but *rending* into several Parties and Factions, and there must unluckily succeed a disorderly *Chaos* and confusion, and every evil work.

Rulers then must of necessity be appointed, to prevent Controversie and settle Peace.

3. And as *Judges* and *Rulers* must be appointed over every Society for *Peace* sake, so must such also be appointed for *Righteousness* sake.

Distributive Justice is the glory, exaltation, the stay, the preservation of any Nation.

Now distributive Justice is, *to render to every man according to the merit of his Work*; that he that doth well might have encouragement by due Reward, and he that doth ill might be discouraged by proportionable Punishments: That there be a right Sentence, and care of a due Execution.

Now if no third Person, or Order of men unconcerned, were agreed upon and constituted as

supream

ſupream Judges to determine the *merit* and *quality* of Private mens Actions, and the meaſure of *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* that did in equity belong to them; We ſee how every man for himſelf, if he hath done well, is ready to overvalue his Merit, and extend the meaſure of Reward to himſelf beyond a due proportion; and if he hath done ill, to extenuate if not excuſe his own Irregularity, and to mitigate if not exempt his Puniſhment. And for his *Neighbour*, every man is ready to extenuate his Merit and leſſen his Reward, to heighten his Crime and aggravate his Puniſhment. So 'tis very improbable, either for himſelf or others, that according to *diſtributive Juſtice* men ſhould paſs a right Sentence or due Execution.

This being clear to every mans Reaſon, *That a parity is not to be allowed, but* Rulers *and* Judges *muſt be appointed over every Society, as well to preſerve Peace as to maintain Righteouſneſs.*

4. And to the conviction of this Truth by their *practice*, all Nations that have aſſociated, have ſubſcribed and have declared their Aſſent to the conveniency and neceſſity of it, by the management of their Concerns: And, *Generalis conſuetudo declarat inſtitutum Naturæ*; For never any City or People, aſſociated, but conſtituted their Governours, and ſome as Supream; nor ſent abroad an Army but appointed their General. The thriving *Ariſtocracy* of the *Romans* were never in any notable ſtreight, but *Trepidi ad Dictatorem confugiunt*, as their chief Remedy and Security. And never was there any tumultuous Rabble of *ſeditious Perſons*, united upon wicked deſigns, that could in reaſon ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe they could ſubſiſt in carrying on their wicked undertakings, in acting for a lawleſs Liberty or Licentiouſneſs, but they alway appointed a *Captain* or *Leader*, to whoſe Command and Conduct they did alwaies ſubmit, when they had made Choice of him to be Supream in any Enterprize that they deſired to be ſucceſsful; and owned him to be ſo.

To Conclude this point then, let it ſtand as unqueſtionable, *That every man that loves his Life, deſires it may be Comfortable, and ſeeks his preſervation and welfare.* And a Comfortable life to prevent evil and promote good, is to be maintained by *Society*, which cannot be compaſſed by ſingularity or ſeparation. Neither could I ever read or hear, that ever any *Society* did in reaſon think or conclude to ſubſiſt and paſs a quiet and comfortable Life, without the appointment of *Governours* among them. 5.

Thus by light of *Reaſon* and her Dictates, by *Nature* and her Laws, it is manifeſt that the appointing of *Governours* over every Society is both neceſſary and convenient, and this will be more fully cleared and illuſtrated, when we conſider it is approved by the Revealed Will of God. 6.

Moſes was a King over *Iſrael*, and a Judge deputed by God, *by whom Kings* did *reign, and Princes* did *decree juſtice.* And where no Governours were there the People did fall into confuſion, as *Iſrael* did at that time when they had *no King*, but *every man did what was right in his own eyes.* And in the laſt diſpenſation, *Cæſars* Authority was owned by Chriſt, and *Tribute* paid to him. And ſo *Pontius Pilate*,

Pilate, *Power was given him from above.* They might abuſe their Power, but their *Authority* was of God. And in St. *Pauls* time, *Magiſtracy* was Gods Ordinance, *Powers* were appointed of God, *Rulers* were Miniſters of God ſet over the People for good. Prayers were to be made unto God for them, and account was to be given unto God by them. And *Humane Ordinances* were to be ſubmitted unto for *the Lords ſake.* And this yet more evident from the *Spirit of Chriſt*, which was to be with his Church to the end of the World, when it was and is the declared Sentence and Faith of all particular Churches, that *Governours are appointed by God.*

And now, how can we but ſtand amazed at the impudence of ſome perverſe Spirits, ungoverned, unnatural Tempers that are to be found in the midſt of this crooked generation, ſuch as neither will Lead nor Drive, neither Command nor Obey, but make it their buſineſs to deſpiſe *Dominions*, and ſpeak evil of *Dignity.* That dare ſpeak and think, that *Superiority* in any man is unnatural, helliſh, Antichriſtian. That *Rule* and *Government* is but the unlucky iſſue of Pride, Arrogance, and Ambition, aſſumed by *Uſurpation.* When from the premiſſes, it muſt be concluded as *Natural*, and the *Ordinance of God.*

Certainly, it is but juſt and reaſonable that ſuch men ſhould ſuffer the puniſhments of their own Choice, and be taught to ſee the madneſs of their own deluſions, by abjuring the Realm, and baniſhed from partaking the Priviledges of a well-governed Society. Sure a City is not ſo fit for ſuch Perſons as a Priſon or a Wilderneſs, who have eſpouſed ſuch

ſuch wild unnatural principles, that are not owned by the Beaſts that periſh.

And it is yet more ſtrange, that any ſuch Tempers ſhould be found in our Nation, where it is moſt apparent that our *Governours* are appointed and approved by God eſpecially.

SECT. IV.

Our Governours appointed and allowed by God eſpecially.

4. AMidſt our *Governours* we have one Supream, Chief and Head over all. And this *Supremacy* and *Headſhip* rightly belongs to him by his legitimate Heirſhip and ſucceſſion, being deſcended from a long ſeries of *Royal Anceſtors*, that had this Power ſucceſſively committed unto them: *Minori diſcrimine Princeps ſumitur quam queritur.* And when we ſeriouſly conſider the *Conſpiracies, Tumults, Factions, Diviſions*, experimentally, that attend upon our Election, we have reaſon to think him moſt likely to be a *Bleſſing* that comes in Peace to be ſet over us by a rightful Succeſſion.

But if any will wilfully ſtill oppoſe, that likes *Election* better than *Succeſſion*, let ſuch remember, There was a time when all the *Tribes* met (and every *Tacit Conſent* was then included) to chooſe Him, and to make our *David*, King. That he

was not more Eminently born, than made *Chief Ruler* among us: And, that by Election as well as Succeſſion, *Supremacy* doth juſtly belong unto him. And Choſen H E was, prudently, freely, and by univerſal Conſent.

But other *Governours* we have, *Inferiour* and *Subordinate*, appointed and allowed of by Him, which (becauſe the Church is in the Kingdom) muſt be of two ſorts, *Eccleſiaſtical* and *Civil*, that the People may live quietly, *in godlineſs and honeſty.*

The Chief of both ſorts of theſe ſubordinate *Governours*, He that is *Supream* convenes to his aſſiſtance, deliberately to *conſult*, and *adviſe*, and *determine*, both in making Laws and Execution. And by this *Determination* and *Concurrence* of our Governours, no Perſon can juſtly fear to ſuffer by a precipitate Rage or Tumult of a *Popular Fury*, or the unreaſonable Impoſitions of an *arbitrary Tyranny*. So if ſoberly it be conſidered, *If any Governours can be ſaid in all the World, certainly ours of* England *muſt be acknowledged to be ſet over us, and appointed by God.* And, were the Learned *Hugo Grotius* that Maſter of *Reaſon* alive, he would conclude the Government of *England*, both in *Church* and *State*, the beſt in all the World.

And if any *Governours* under Heaven can be ſaid, to be allowed and approved of by God over any Society, ours of *England* muſt in reaſon be concluded to be ſo undoubtedly; not only from their reaſonable *Conſtitution*, which is moſt convenient, but from that extraordinary care and love that God hath declared towards them from their Miraculous *Reſtitution*, which, if we conſider, cannot be ſaid

to

to be done by the power of *Man*, but by the overruling Spirit of *God*.

Gods *love* and *liking* of Persons and Nations, is more seen by *deliverance* of them, than by their *continued preservation*. He was more eminently known to be *Israels* God, by bringing them out of *Egypts Bondage*, and the *Babyloniſh Captivity*, than by bringing them into the Land of *Canaan*. The turning again *the Captivity of Zion*, muſt force the Heathen to ſay, *The Lord hath done great things for them, and taken great care of them.*

And for us, that have felt the miſery of Old, and ſeen of late the *Deliverance* and *Reſtitution* of our *Zion*, the Heathen would riſe up in Judgment againſt us, if we ſhould not ſay, *It was the Lords doing*. It is his mind and purpoſe, declared by this Miraculous *Reſtitution*, That this People of *England*, ſhould be led like Sheep by the hand of *Moſes* and *Aaron*.

Thus Governours are appointed over every Society, and ours of England *over us eſpecially, by the dictates of Reaſon, and appointment of God.*

CHAP. II.

That Governours thus appointed, are to aim and contrive for the good of the Society, and deliberately to determine and publiſh Laws. And Subjects are obliged to ſubmit to thoſe Laws accordingly.

Section,

I. *Governours are to contrive for the Publick good and welfare.*

II. *To promote Publick good they muſt take care to eſtabliſh Laws.*

III. *Laws muſt have their Rectitude, and oblige to what is Juſt.*

IV. *Deliberation is requiſite before determination of Laws.*

V. *After Deliberation, there muſt be a Publication.*

VI. *To Governours Laws thus Eſtabliſhed, Subjects ought to ſubmit with willingneſs, and Ours of* England *ought to ſubmit eſpecially.*

SECT.

SECT. I.

GOD, in whom we live, move, and have our being, hath ſo ſweetly and wiſely diſpoſed of this Syſteme of *Creatures* to his own Glory, that every Creature hath a natural inclination and propenſity to the *preſervation* and *welfare* of its Fellow Creatures; and out of that *love* and *propenſity* they freely communicate, according to their ability, what is good and beneficial. And this *Communicative Love* is diffuſed as an active principle to cement, compact and uphold every part of this admirable Structure in that glorious frame and order in which now it ſtands, ſo as every *Creature* ſeems to looſe of its own nature, when it ceaſeth to incline to this Natural operation. For who ſo blind but muſt perceive, that amidſt Inanimate Creatures, freely and chearfully, the *Sun* imparts its *light*, the *Heavens* their kindly *influence*, the *Clouds* their refreſhing *Rain*, the *Fire* its *warmth*, the *Earth* its *increaſe*. In Senſitive Creatures, *Birds* and *Beaſts* are gracious and helpful to their *fellow Creatures* of the ſame ſpecies, and joyn in Company and Bodies to that end, and call their *Fellows* to the ſame common food, and affright them from open ſnare and danger.

But this inclination in the *Creatures*, receives the meaſure and limits of its activity according to the different *principles*, *faculties* and *endowments* they

have to operate withal: So every *Creature*, the more perfect it is, and the more it hath of Gods likeneſs, the more it diſcovers this *propenſity of activity* and *readineſs*, to communicate what is *comfortable* and *ſuitable* to the nature of its Fellow Creatures.

Man therefore, that hath moſt of *Gods likeneſs* hath the greateſt *propenſity* to this goodneſs, and is naturally addicted to ſhew it, by communicating of what is moſt beneficial to them moſt willingly, who are like *God* and *himſelf*, and are in greateſt Capacity to receive, and diſpoſed to make the beſt improvements of this *Communication.*

Now among Men it is to be ſuppoſed, That *Governours* are, or ſhould be moſt like God, *who fills the Earth with his goodneſs, he openeth his hand, and fills all things living with plenteouſneſs.* As *Gods Deputies*, they ought to be moſt ready and active, from an *heavenly providence*, to impart what is beneficial to them that are under them. They are not ſet up aloft like liveleſs, dead *Idols*, for men to gaze on, to admire and Idolize, and yet continue uſeleſs, neither ſee nor hear, nor regard nor contrive for the *good* and *comfort* of others. But, as living *Images*, of that *benificent God* whom they repreſent, out of a gracious providence they are to be contriving, directing and acting for the *good* of them under them: *præſunt ut proſint*, above and over others to *benefit* others, not minding their private advantage, but are elevated to have the more Heavenly influence for the publick *good* of the Community over which they are placed; *Non Dominandi cupiditate imperant, ſed officio conſulendi.* Their office, like *Shepheards*,

is

is not barely to fleece, but to feed the Flock; *Patres patriæ*, not only to defend and maintain the People, but are to direct and order them. *Miniſters of God for good*, Rom. 13. 4. For *compleat good*, being to watch over their *Souls* for good, while they carefully endeavour that the People under them may lead *contented lives*, full of all *peace*, in all *godlineſs and honeſty*.

If any ſuch be known, who watch for their own *private gain* more than *publick good*, let ſuch modeſtly be deſired, either to lay down their *Honour*, or take up their *Office*. For its evident by *Reaſon* and *Scripture*, That it is every good Rulers duty, not only to hinder the *Evil*, but to promote the *Publick welfare* of the Society over which he is placed.

SECT. II.

To promote Publick good, Governours muſt take care to eſtabliſh Laws.

OF neceſſity there muſt be *Laws* conſtituted about every Company of *Men* that are knit into one Body; for if not *reſtrained* and *limited*, many Perſons that have more *Sence* than *Reaſon*, would wildly break out into exorbitant excurſions, and miſlead others, extravagantly, into dangerous *Irregularities*. A City had better be without *Walls* than *Laws*, its *ſafety* depends more upon the latter

than the former. For without *Laws* Men would be like Beaſts, the *ſtrongeſt* would devour the *weakeſt*, and ſavagely tear and devour one another without controul. The *Sword* would be the Rule of *Juſtice*, and the ſtrongeſt *Arm* would have the beſt *Cauſe*, Men would regard *Power* more than *Right*. So that *Law* in a Society is like a *Soul* in a Body, without which the *Body* is corrupted and diſſolved immediately.

And as *Laws* muſt be of neceſſity to uphold the *being*, ſo muſt they be to preſerve the *welfare* of any Society: For they afford direction and guidance for *humane actions*; And as good take the *Sun* out of the Firmament as *Laws* out of a Nation, without which, as in a perpetual Night, men would ſtumble (if not fall) and daſh continually one upon another, and offenſively. Another hath it, *Laws* are as *Eyes* to the Commonwealth, that give *beauty* to the *Face*, and *direction* to the whole *Body*. But to ſet forth the *uſefulneſs* of *Laws*, ſure I cannot do it better than to compare them to *Nerves* and *Sinews*, ligaments of the *Body politick*, not only to compact and knit the ſeveral Joynts into *one Body*, but to convey *life* and *ſpirits* unto every part as is convenient, that they may all agree in the ſame *regular motion* as they are adapted, and every part may move for the *ſafety* and *welfare* of the whole. Neither *being* nor *welfare* of a Society can be preſerved without *Laws*. But, *Who are to make and appoint Laws?* There's the Queſtion.

He that ordered Kings to *Reign*, hath ordained Princes to *decree Juſtice*. The firſt duty and work in

in Magiſtrates is to *ordain* and *conſtitute Laws*. This is the *Rulers* Province. It was rightly determined by the Schoolmen, *Non cujuſlibet Ratio facere potuit Legem : Every man is not wiſe enough to make a Law.* And if he had a *Head* to *contrive*, yet he hath no *Authority* to *eſtabliſh*. And there is no reaſon to think, That any *publick Law* ſhould be of a *Private mans* conſtitution. For every man of the ſame Condition may challenge the ſame Liberty: So that there being contrary *Judgments* and *determinations*, there might be contrary *Laws*, and ſo there would follow contrary *Actions*, inevitable *diſtraction* and *oppoſition*, which will not only deſtroy the *welfare*, but the *being* of the Society. For private Perſons to make *Rules* and *Laws* for their own private Actions, who can hinder them.

But our gracious God hath appointed *Governours* as his Deputies, by a wiſe *Providence*, to direct and order the publick Actions of men, for the publick good of the *Society* in which they are intereſſed; As, *God*, the *World*, and *Chriſt* his Church; ſo are good Governours to Rule over their People by conſtituting *juſt Laws* that promote their Happineſs.

SECT.

SECT. III.

LAWS must be eſtabliſhed, and the nature of a *Law* is, that it doth oblige *ad id quod rectum*. It is the firſt thing required to the Conſtitution of a Law by the Schoolmen, *Rectitudo*, *Right*. A tendency to the End: A *Law*, a *Canon*, a *Rule*, is a notified *boundary* to confine and limit mens Actions, that they may not be looſe and extravagant, but they may be directed in a ſtreight Line or tendency to the prize aimed at, *viz.* The *Comfort* and *Content* of the Society to which ſuch *Laws* are compoſed and publiſhed.

The word Καγὼν, is oft uſed by St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Grecian* Churches, and oft he alludes to their Agoniſtical concertations in their *Iſtmian Games*, eſpecially that of *Running*: And beſide, the *Barriers* from whence the *Courſers* ſtarted or leaped, and the *Prize* or *Crown* to which they tended, they had their Καγὼνα, a *white Line* which marked out the Path, bounded the Race; and whatever the heat or activity of the *Racers*, ran they never ſo ſwiftly or vigorouſly, if they tranſgreſſed or ran over the Line, this was not νομίμως ἀθλήσαι, 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. to *ſtrive Legally*; and conſequentially they loſt the *prize*.

A Chriſtians Converſation amidſt *Believers* is a *Race* from the firſt exertion of Reaſon, whereby he leaps into Society: He ſtretches forth, and aims at an incorruptible Crown that God holds forth unto him. Whatever the Chriſtians *heat* or *agility* is, if he

he will *so run as* he *may obtain*, he muſt obſerve that Κανὼν, that *Rule* that is given him, and not tranſgreſs thoſe *limits* that are preſcribed him. All *aberration*, all *extravagancy* muſt be declined, he muſt keep cloſe exactly to the *line* and *limits* preſcribed, that he may move in a direct tendency to the End propoſed.

Now *Rulers* and *Governours* are to intend the publick good and welfare of the Society. To compaſs this they *Eſtabliſh Laws*, and theſe Laws are directive *Rules* of humane Actions, tending *ad bonum publicum*. They are to think and conſider, and if *Reaſon* rightly deliberates, ſhe will conclude and determine only of ſuch things as are *true*, *honeſt*, *juſt*, *pure*, *lovely*, of *good report*, *if there be any vertue*, *if there be any praiſe*, they will think and determine only of ſuch things. *Injuſt* then and *diſhoneſt Commands* cannot be called rightly *Laws*, becauſe they tend to the hurt, not the good of the Publick. For *Rulers* to Command without controul, and to ſet no bounds to their *lawleſs Will*, and inconſiderately to enjoyn what is *unjuſt*, *illegal*, and what tends not to good, is the *Vice* of Superiority and Power, not the *vertue* of Ruling by a *Law*. For nothing can be called a *Law* but muſt oblige to what is *Juſt*, and tend to a good End. The End muſt be *Peace*, the Means muſt be *Righteouſneſs*; for the effect of Righteouſneſs is *Peace*: And, where *Glory* dwells in a Land, *Mercy and Truth meet together*, *Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſs each other*. And as ſuch Commands cannot be called *Laws*, if *injuſt*, ſo, when impoſed, they are not binding nor obliging. It was not more ſtout and valiant than rea-

reaſonable

ſonable and honeſt, that *pious Apology* made by the *Father* for the poor perſecuted Chriſtians to the Emperour, who commanded them irreligiouſly to ſacrifice to Idols, *Da veniam Imperator, &c. major eſt, &c. Give pardon, Oh Emperour, we cannot obey thy Commands in this thing; for he that is greater than thou art, Commands the contrary.* And when Commands are contrary from two Powers, *ſupream* and *ſubordinate*, greater and leſſer, it is beyond diſpute which we ought to obey. To obey the Subordinate powers Commands, when the Supream forbids, is downright *Rebellion*; but to obey the Supream powers Commands, although the Subordinate power Commands the contrary, is honeſt and reaſonable *Obedience.* And the Supream, holy God, who Commands only what is *Juſt*, is to be obeyed before the *Emperour*, when he is Subordinate, when he commands things injuſt and unwarrantable. Therefore with the Three Children, *We are not careful to anſwer the King in this matter.* It's *better to obey God than Man.* This then we conclude, That Laws of Rulers muſt be *Juſt*, and tend to a good End.

Some Laws are *Natural* of things or actions Natural; ſome *Poſitive*, of things or actions Indifferent. Thoſe that are Natural have, *Intrinſecam vim obligatoriam*, from their Equity they have an obliging vertue, if no publick poſition or Conſtitution. Theſe are of things or actions of their own nature either *good* or *bad*, and would be followed or avoided by Reaſonable Man, and would be approved or diſallowed of a Juſt God, if he had neither commanded nor forbidden them.

Now

Now, beſides the *Ten Words* God gave to *Jacob*, there were *Statutes* and *Ordinances* that God gave to *Iſrael*, when particularly he undertook the Government of them, ſome *Voluntary Laws*, ſome *Ceremonial*, ſome *Judicial* things injoyned, that were of their own nature neither good nor bad. But, *Præcipiendo debita, vetando Deus illicita fecit*, Gods Authority being uncontroulable, and his Wiſdom unqueſtionable, they were to be followed or avoided as moſt convenient for that People in that preſent condition. What was intrinſecally lawful was univerſally binding, *Chriſt came not to deſtroy* that *Law, but to fulfil it*; *Heaven* and *Earth* may paſs away, but not *one tittle* of that *Law* was not to paſs away, but ought to be fulfilled. But what was *poſitive*, *particular* and *voluntary*, were Changable, and theſe had their *period*, ſome of them at Chriſts Paſſion, more of them at the diſſolution of the Nation.

Now, as it was with *God* and his *Iſrael*, ſo is it with godly *Rulers* and their *People*. There are certain Rules and Statutes rationally agreed upon and publiſhed, as the moſt Juſt and beſt directions, conducing moſt to the *good* of the Community where divulged; among which ſome are *Natural*, that are of their own nature intrinſecally good, and have an obliging nature, and would be binding as Laws of God, if no poſition, if no Conſtitution from Man, ſuch as neceſſarily indiſpenſible, neither are they to be abrogated or null'd by man, that cannot be made unjuſt by God himſelf. But, other Laws among them are *poſitive* and *voluntary*, which have their poſition from Man only, and ſo may be called

Humane

Humane Ordinances, Laws of Convenience, ſuch Conſtitutions as are eſtabliſhed upon deliberation as moſt convenient, *pro hic & nunc*, in the Judgment of Grave and ſober Perſons, choſen and appointed for determination of ſuch things, for the peace and good of the Community wherein they live: And, *Sufficit Ratio Univerſalis*, we are to abide by it. That a thing or action ſuitable, and in Reaſon tending to the peace and good of the Society, ſhould be *determined*, and when determined ſhould be *obliging*. To Conclude then this particular, *Lex eſt ordinatio Rationis ad bonum publicum ab eo, qui curam habet Communitatis promulgata:* When ſo it is, that a Law is a right order and appointment of Reaſon for Publick good, publiſhed from him that hath the care of the Society. And, ſith ſome Laws are *natural*, *immutable*, *indiſpenſable*, and are fixed and determined eternally before any Conſtitution of Governours; but others are *voluntary*, *temporary*, *mutable*, that have their Conſtitution and Eſtabliſhment from Governours determination upon *convenience*. Theſe latter determinations of indifferent things are properly called *Laws of Governours*. Laws and Determinations of *Natural* things, the Governours do but revive and invigorate them; but the Laws and Determinations of *Indifferent* things, the Governour animates them, gives them being and eſtabliſhes them. So theſe *poſitive Laws*, Conſtitutions of Indifferent things, to prevent *diviſion* and ſettle *peace*, theſe are properly the Laws of Governours; and it is natural and neceſſary for them, to take care of ſuch *Determinations* in their reſpective Societies; They

are

are Reaſonable and Juſt becauſe of things not unlawful: They are neceſſary becauſe they tend to Peace.

Thus it is clear, to any ſober Reaſon, *That Governours ought to determine and eſtabliſh Laws, for the good of the Society in which concerned.*

SECT. IV.

4. DEliberation is requiſite to be previous before the Determination of ſuch Laws: For, when a Law is the ultimate dictate or concluſion of the Governours practical Reaſoning, this cannot be ſuppoſed without previous diſcurſe, without conſidering and perpending ſeriouſly the *legality* or *illegality*, the *convenience* or *inconvenience* of the Action, and ſo by publick Authority it is decreed to be done, or forborn, accordingly.

Imperious Commands of the Greateſt perſons, that are impoſed ſuddenly or precipitately, loſe much of their Authority and influence upon the *Subject*, being entertained but faintly, when liable to be ſuſpected as the iſſue of *pride*, *ambition*, *fancy*, or *paſſion*: But when the morality and conveniency of the Action commanded or forbidden is fully debated and weighed, before decreed, all *prejudice* is quite abandoned, when it clearly appears the Decree is the reſult of a ſound Judgment, and the product

product of a ſober Reaſoning. Though many Laws of Governours, fixing and conſtituting, are called *Voluntary Laws*, yet they are not raſhly, but diſcurſively eſtabliſhed: For Governours are Gods *Deputies*, and like him determine Rules, διὰ βουλῆ τῆ θελήματος, *by the Counſel of his Will. Deliberandum eſt diu quod Statuendum eſt ſemel.* Determination of things are not warrantably done but in every Counſel, as in the firſt, πολλῆς συζητήσεως γενομένης, much debate and diſquiſition being made, the *Decree* was fixed accordingly.

To Command therefore, arbitrarily any thing or action out of a liſtful appetite, *raſhly* or *unadviſedly*, in the heat of a Paſſion, is an Impulſe *ſenſual*, found in Beaſts, and cannot be proper to men. For when the Sun of *Reaſon* goes down in the night of *Paſſion*, Men, like Beaſts, run headlong into Pitfalls, Snares and Gins, and give, too haſtily, place to the Deſtroyer. That cannot be a binding Rule to Rational Creatures, and entertained as a Law, that comes without *Deliberation*. *Nebuchadnezzar's* Commands by *Sheriffs*, Dan. 3. for *all People to fall down and worſhip the Image of Gold*, was not a Law though it had Publication; for it wanted two things required to conſtitute a *Command* a Law: 1. It wanted *Rectitude*, it was not Juſt. 2. It wanted *Deliberation*. But when *Conſideration* is antecedaneous to the Decrees of Rulers, it gives the Subject great ſatisfaction, and inclines them chearfully to ſubmit and conform to ſuch Rules eſtabliſhed, if they think ſoberly, and eſteem the *Ruler* wiſer than themſelves. And what is the Juſtice of our Laws eſtabliſhed, in this required particular? what

what is the reaſonableneſs of our *Submiſſion* is clearly apparent among us, when there is nothing enacted or eſtabliſhed among us, but upon long diſcuſſion and ſerious deliberation, and that by ſober and wiſe Perſons, *ſuffecti*, ſubſtituted and deputed by us beyond all queſtion and exception. If *Laws* eſtabliſhed by ſuch Perſons be not received thankfully, and be not ſubmitted unto heartily, the perverſe Tranſgreſſor ſins without excuſe.

It is certainly evident in the Conſtitution of our Laws, what is required in every good Law, *That they are determined upon Deliberation.*

SECT. V.

5. LAWS, when deliberately determined by Rulers, are to be *publiſhed* to the Society, that they may oblige the Subject, *ad eorum qui Legi ſubjiciuntur notitiam deduci oportet*, *Tho. Aquinas.* They that are to be brought to the *ſubjection* of the Law, are to be brought to the *knowledge* of the Law.

Natural Laws there be, and neceſſary it is they ſhould be publiſhed; for, although ſuch Laws are written in mens hearts, yet by evil Cuſtome, Complyance, Paſſion and prevalency of Temptations, and men *ſenſually* yielding to them, theſe Laws are blurred and almoſt obliterated, and neceſſary it is, that by repeated impercuſſions, there ſhould be endeavoured a new impreſſion by a new impunction.

Neceſſary it is that Rulers, by a new inculcating, ſhould give a freſh beauty, vigour and obligation to them, and by annexing a weight of *Puniſhments* and a ſpring of *Reward*, ſhould ſet Subjects in a conſtant motion to obſerve and keep them; for, if concealed in ſilence, they would be paſſed by Careleſly, and that men may be awakened to keep them, and obſerve them diligently, they muſt be publiſhed.

That being warrantable and commendable to be done by Rulers, Gods Deputies, that was done by God and his Prophets, and by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who in ſeveral diſpenſations of thoſe very Rules made a new publication. And for Rules of Actions in their nature, Indifferent, no man can queſtion but they muſt be determined, to avoid *Controverſies* and ſettle *Peace*; and when ſo determined, it is but reaſonable there ſhould be an open promulgation. When by ſo doing, the Subject, from the declared Judgment of his Governours who is ſet over him for good, muſt certainly be inclined to a ready Obedience.

Tranſgreſſion of Laws Natural, publiſhed, being a double Tranſgreſſion, when the Offender, *Audet non tantum malum, ſed malum vetitum Committere.* He is impudent that *neglects* and *rebels*, and left without excuſe; for if the Laws had been concealed they might have pleaded *ignorance*, but being promulged and openly known, the Tranſgreſſor is *inexcuſable*, and therefore his ſin remaineth. Let any indifferent man then be Judge, if the Refractory *Diſobedience* of ſome unperſwaſible Tempers amidſt us be not abſolutely inexcuſable, when in our

out Laws nothing Injuſt is injoyned, nothing determined but was *deliberated*, nothing eſtabliſhed but was *promulged*.

Certainly, as it is the Governours, or Rulers duty, for the good of the Society, thus to fix and eſtabliſh Laws; ſo it is the Subjects duty, to ſubmit willingly to thoſe Laws thus fixed accordingly.

SECT. VI.

6. GOvernours are to be ſubmitted unto by the Subjects of that Society over which they are Conſtituted; for *Governours* and *Subjects* are Relatives, *Mutuo ſe ponunt*, &c. They come both to their Relations by the ſame Conſtitution, and what appoints ſome of the Society to *command* and *direct*, appoints others in the ſame Society to *ſubmit* and *obey*; and very rarely can any Government be inſtanced, but *Oaths* were given and *Subſcriptions* taken, and men ſeveral waies obliged themſelves to conſent and ſubmit to their Governours, in their Adminiſtration, and to acquieſs in their Determinations and Conſtitutions. So that *Submiſſion* is not an outward honour and reverence to their Perſons in Offices and Dignity, but conformity to *Directions* of Governours, and *obedience* to their lawful Commands, and juſt Rules delivered by them for Publick good.

And as St. *Paul*, so St. *Peter* to his dispersed *Hebrews*, least they should be prejudiced from a specious pretence of *Liberty*, and cast off all yokes of Service, and break off all bonds of Obedience, Authoritatively commands them, to shew the honesty of their Conversation by a chearful *submission* to the Just Commands of Lawful Governours, as 1 *Pet.*2.13. when he enjoyns them to *submit to every Ordinance of man, for the Lords sake.* Just Commands I advisedly put in, for that is ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, what is just and reasonable, and tends directly to the designed End that is *Humane*, and to such an Ordinance they are to submit for the Lords sake.

Now Commands and Actions of Governours are of things and actions of two sorts, either *Natural* or *Indifferent.*

Natural would be binding if no Constitution; but Rulers seeing mens averseness and backwardness to what is apparently good, out of love and care to their Peoples welfare put a new life, and revive even those Laws by a new publication, to stir up the Peoples attention to them, and observance of them; by which course their *Obligation* is not remitted but intended. And no Subject but shews his perverse and rebellious Temper that dare think and say, That those Rules are less lawful, or less binding, because a Lawful Authority hath revived them, and upon the fore-mentioned necessity and Reasons hath afresh enjoyned them.

Other Actions are of an *Indifferent nature*, neither good nor bad of themselves, yet must be determined by Governours, to prevent *Dissension*, and

settle

ſettle *Peace*, the ground and foundation of all Temporal bleſſings, that make mens lives comfortable in any Society. And ſoberly let it be conſidered, and the morality of the fifth Commandement, the Rulers *Authority* and Subjects *Obedience* is plainly diſcovered, by his voluntary Submiſſion to Commands and Ordinances of this nature, and determinations of things in their own nature indifferent. For if the matter be unlawful that is unlawful by Commands of Superiours, then *Daniel's Vetitum eſt* is ſufficient, *We are not careful— It is better to obey God than Man.* If the thing be profitable, thou ſerveſt thy own turn, thy own Intereſt, rather than obeyeſt thy Ruler. If the thing be intrinſecally Juſt, thou art obliged to do that although not injoyned it. So the truth is, the Rulers Authority, and Subjects ſincere Submiſſion, is chiefly ſeen by his *Obedience* to thoſe Commands which injoyn things that are of their own nature Indifferent. Where neither the Nature of the thing, nor the Subjects Reaſon or Profit is convincing, nor any other by-Reſpect induceth him to Obedience. And thy *ſubmiſſion* to thoſe things is the cleareſt evidence of thy ſubjection to Higher Powers, which is undoubtedly according to the Law of Nature, and Will of Chriſt.

And if thou doſt not abide according to thy former Conſent to ſuch Determinations of thy Rulers, and ſubmit to them, it is a plain diſcovery of ſome prejudice and diſaffection to thy Ruler, that thou thinkeſt meanly of his *wiſdom*, or ſuſpecteſt his *goodneſs*, or deſpiſeſt his *Authority*: That thou eſteemeſt thy ſelf *wiſer*, *better* and *Greater* than he

that is ſet over thee: When thou dareſt in prejudice, wilfully oppoſe thy own miſguided Perſwaſion againſt the ſober, well-grounded Determination of thy Governour, which was fixed to miniſter to *Peace*. And now conſider, what thou doſt that thou maiſt enjoy thy own obſtinate Perſwaſion, thou wilt loſe thy Peace; and certainly, thy gratifying thy Humour will not countervail the loſs of thy Peace, beſides the galling Guilt of thy wilful Diſobedience, when by the Light of Nature, as well as by the Will of Chriſt, thou art obliged to ſubmit to the *Ordinance of Man for the Lords ſake*; *whether of the King, as ſupream, &c.* Thou art from thy heart to be ſubject to their Determinations not only for *wrath*, but *for Conſcience ſake*; for though the Law or Ordinance be *Humane*, yet thy obligation is *Divine*.

The Law may be poſitive, and voluntary of things in their own nature Indifferent, yet thy *Submiſſion* muſt be natural to juſt Determinations, and according to the Law of Nature and Rules of Chriſt, as certainly as there is any Morality in the fifth Commandement, or that *Peter* was an Apoſtle and wrote the Will of Chriſt, who bids us *ſubmit to every* humane *Ordinance for the Lords ſake*.

When but two ſorts of Laws, ſome *Natural*, that are predetermined, but are enlivened and further confirmed, others *Voluntary* or *Poſitive*, that when not unjuſt, receive their being, conſtituting, and ratifying, from their promulgation by Governours. To both theſe Subjects are to ſubmit, not only *for wrath*, but *for Conſcience ſake*. And for us of this Nation, when God hath manifeſted his approbation

probation and good-liking to our Governours and Government by his wonderful Reſtauration, it were unworthy to think ſuch Ingratitude could be taxed, That either the *Governours* ſhould be remiſs in fixing Juſt Laws for right Ruling, or that Reaſonable *Subjects* ſhould be backward in ready Obeying.

Conclude we then this Point as to our ſelves, That our Governours of *England* being appointed for the good of the Nation, and having eſtabliſhed and publiſhed Laws, Our Subjects are bound to ſubmit to thoſe Laws accordingly.

CHAP. III.

The first care of Governours ſhould be, by Laws, to oblige their Subjects generally, to a Publick exerciſe of Religion.

Section,

I. *The firſt care and main end of Governours ſhould be, to inſtil and imprint an eſteem, love and care of Religion in their People.*

II. *Governours are to endeavour among their Subjects, to promote the outward exerciſe of Religion.*

III. *Governours are to take care, that the exerciſe of Religion among their Subjects be Publick and Univerſal.*

SECT.

SECT. I.

The first care and main end of Governours should be, to instil and imprint an esteem, love and care of Religion in their People.

1. FOR it being sufficiently proved, That Governours in their Offices are chiefly to aim at, and contrive for the general good of the People under them, that they may live peaceably and happily, and because the means nearest to that end must be *Religion*, their next care (to compass this End) must be to imprint in the minds of the People, an *esteem* and *love* of Religion, as the directest way to their Happiness.

That naturally every man hath a sense of a Deity, is beyond Controversie. He sees and observes himself, and all things visible, to be made and upheld by an Invisible Power, and governed and disposed by a more excellent wisdom and discretion. From the Creation and Order of things that are made, men by natural Reason may come to the knowledge of a Being not made and independent: That He is a *Spirit*, *Supream*, *Infinite*, *Omnipotent*, *necessarily Eternal*, *All-sufficient*, and incomprehensibly *transcendent* in all Perfections, from the light of Reason (if not clouded) He must be *acknowledged*, and being thus acknowledged he must be *worshipped*. It was not only at *Athens* but all the World over, That the God that Made

the

the World ought to be worſhipped; That this Infinite Being may not be offended but pleaſed; and that his poor Creatures may eſcape the dreadful and intollerable effects of his Anger who is *Almighty*, and gain all the ineffable contentments of his Love who is *All-ſufficient*, muſt be the main deſign of Rational men.

Now to compaſs this End, certainly *Religion* and the *worſhip of GOD* muſt be the way. And, what is Religion? *It is a reſpectful obſervance of that Majeſty which is to be reverently adored; A due reſpect of the rational Creature to the Supream Being.* This *Reſpect* conſiſts in three things:

1. In high apprehenſions and eſtimation of Gods infinite Excellencies and Perfections. *To think highly and honourably of God, is the beginning of Piety and Religion.* Aug.

2. In ſuitable Affections. Having rightly eſteemed God as the beſt and greateſt of Beings, that we *fear* him as the Greateſt, and *love* him as the Beſt, is another part of that Reſpect we owe to him.

3. In a ſuitable ſignification of both. Man being created for Society, and naturally inclining to joyn himſelf to others, and ſeeing in the ſtate we are in, we cannot comfortably hold any Communion but by a ſenſible ſignification of our Apprehenſions and Affections; That we give Atteſtation of theſe things muſt needs be natural and neceſſary.

And theſe Sentiments of the neceſſity and benefit of *Religion* all People have had from the beginning. All Nations were ever perſwaded, that they ſhould be moſt Proſperous who were moſt Religious.

Religious. No People ſo Barbarous, but they gave joyntly their ſignifications of *obſervance*, and *piety* and *reſpect* to him they accounted Supream. Hence they made ſome teſtifications and acknowledgments by *Sacrifices*, and other Religious Rites, to appeaſe and make that Deity they adored propitious and gracious. And though all Nations and People had originally and naturally received theſe impreſſions and perſwaſions of the neceſſity and commodiouſneſs of *Religion*, yet we never read nor heard of any Famous Governours, but they have revived and cleared theſe Old Impreſſions by new Laws and Injunctions.

And whereas this care of implanting *Religion* in the minds of the People for their good, is to be found in all Governours that improve their Reaſon to right Ends in the diſcharge of their Offices, yet this Care ought to be chiefly and eminently in thoſe Governours, that, beſides the light of Reaſon, have from the publication of the Goſpel a moſt clear diſcovery of the infinite Excellencies and Perfections of God, and of that true Religion which ties men to God, which teaches whom, and how we ought to worſhip. For if to have God Infinite appeaſed to us, and pleaſed with us, be mans ultimate End, and this End is no otherwiſe attainable than by Religion, moſt eaſily attainable by the beſt and trueſt, and that is the Religion preſcribed to us in the Goſpel; certainly, that our Rulers ſhould command an obſervance of that Religion of the *Goſpel* is very agreeable to the end of their Conſtitution, and to their Profeſſion of being *Chriſtians*.

The

The first design of a Ruler, set over the People for their good, is to take care for what is best; and the care of *Religion* is the best Care men can have in this World. *Hear, O ye Kings, understand and learn ye that are Judges of the Earth.* Men must *give unto* Cæsar *the things that are* Cæsars; and *Cæsar* himself must *give unto God the things that are Gods.* The *Jewish* Kings had the Book of the *Law* delivered to them, and our Kings the Book of the *Gospel*, at their Inauguration.

If we consider the effects of Religion, the sweet fruits of it in our own private condition, or more publick relation, that Blessedness which at all times and every where does accompany her, we cannot wonder, that it should be our own, and the Rulers care to promote and advance Religion. There is a delight and great content that arises from all holy *employments*, and a blessedness inseparable from all holy *affections. Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for them that are true of heart. Poverty of spirit* entitles to the Kingdom of Heaven, mourning to comfort, *hungring and thirsting after righteousness* attended with satisfaction and fulness; *the pure in heart* are nearer to the sight of God. *Piety* brings the best contentment, and the surest gain; *Her waies are waies of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* It is this, without which we cannot be fit for any Society: He cannot truly love his Neighbour, that does not honour and love God; he cannot be faithful and honest, he cannot be sweet and kind, and easie to others.

And now be your own Judges, you the prophane and irreligious men of these Times, whose wit (the thing

thing you ſo much pretend to) ſhews it ſelf in nothing but in ſcoffing at Religion, and in making it a trick of State to preſerve Peace and Order. Is it not juſt and reaſonable, that you ſhould ſuffer the reſults of your own Judgment, be baniſhed out of all Society, be excluded from the protection of a well-ordered Government; ſeeing you would laugh that out of the World which your ſelves confeſs unawares to be ſo conducive to the preſervation of it?

SECT. II.

Governours are to endeavour amongſt their Subjects, to promote the outward exerciſe of Religion.

THE outward exerciſe of Religion is natural to us, while we are converſant on Earth: For, as it is natural to worſhip and ſerve God (who diſcerns the thoughts, intentions and affections) with our *Spirits*; ſo it is Natural, to give ſome external and ſenſible demonſtrations of that inward Devotion, that, while we Converſe with men, we may give them ſatisfaction and evidence of our being *Religious*. And, among men, the Ruler ought before all to be ſatisfied, that he may with chearfulneſs and pleaſure adminiſter his office, and give up his account with joy, as having not watched for the good of his People in vain.

Now, the thoughts of the Subject are not under the Rulers cognizance; He can judge only by the outward acts. God alone knows effects by cauſes;

We

We no otherwiſe know Cauſes than by Effects, Fire by *heat*, the Sun by *light*, and Life by *motion*, Religion by *exerciſe*, and Affection by *outward ſignifications*. And we are to make theſe ſenſible Demonſtrations, not only for the ſatisfaction of others, but alſo for the glory of God; whom as we are to glorifie with all the faculties of our Souls, to know and conſider his Excellencies with our *underſtandings*, to ſubmit to, and obey him in our *Wills*; ſo we are to worſhip him with our *Bodies*, our *hands* to be lifted up to him, our *Eyes* to wait on him, our *Ears* to hear him, and our *Tongues* to praiſe him.

The neceſſity of this outward exerciſe of Religion appears farther, from our being made not to be alone but for Society: And no Society can be maintained without an outward Communication. The acknowledgment of this we may by a very eaſie conſequence force from thoſe Men, that profeſs to be ſo much againſt it; who aſſemble together, and in their Aſſemblies uſe long Prayers, and prolixe Preachings, without which exerciſes and viſible attendances, they think they cannot evidence themſelves Religious, with ſatisfaction either to themſelves or others.

Were we indeed in the ſtate of *Angels*, and able to communicate our thoughts by inviſible ſpecies, and by our bare volitions; then (and not till then) we might upon the pretence of a true heart, and a good diſpoſition of mind content our ſelves and our Neighbours. In the mean time, it is natural in all things, to give ſome ſenſible indication of our thoughts, and to ſignifie to others, how we are affected

affected within: *Bodies* and *Souls*, whilſt united together, muſt needs have an influence upon one another; A diſtracted mind has a lowring brow, and a merry heart has a chearful countenance. By this outward exerciſe of Religion we raiſe an eſteem and love of Religion, in our ſelves, and in others.

1. In our ſelves. For we grow into a love of, and delight in that thing we daily converſe with; it becomes eaſie and familiar to us. Acts become Habits, and are rooted faſt by a frequent repetition. Strength is encreaſed by uſe, and love of Religion by exerciſe.

2. In others. For man is prone to Imitation, and haſtily follows Example. We do many things for no other reaſon, but becauſe others do them.

And here we muſt needs be amazed at the unreaſonable ſpeeches of *Quakers*, and others, who, becauſe God is a *Spirit*, and the Goſpel requires a worſhip in *ſpirit*, will have God to diſregard *externals*, and not to think himſelf glorified by outward Services. Wild principles, mad deluſions, fitted to deſtroy all Government, and to make all Chriſtian Converſation unneceſſary. For, if God accept not *external actions*, when agreeable to the Law, and be not diſpleaſed with them, when diſagreeable; if God himſelf be ſo unconcerned, we have little reaſon to take any care in our Actions. But we are to remember, that the Laws of the Goſpel are of two ſorts; ſome relating to the intentions and affections, and actions *ſpiritual* and *internal*; theſe Laws tend to the private peace of a man, and his happineſs within himſelf. Other Laws reſpecting the outward words and actions,

and

and designing to make a man happy in *Society* and *Converſation*, and to fit him to do things to the edification and comfort of others, and to the honour of Chriſtianity.

SECT. III.

Governours are to take care, that the exerciſe of Religion among their Subjects be Publick and Univerſal.

1. *Publick.* Only of things done in Publick can the Governour take cognizance of; and certainly, no wiſe Magiſtrate did ever make a Law concerning thoſe things, which he could have no knowledge of afterwards, whether they were done or no. The Worſhip of God (excepting times of Perſecution, and ſuch neceſſities) was ever *publick*, ſince there was any at all. Hence all people had their Altars or Groves, their Mountains or Vallies, their Orbs, Tabernacles or Temples, where they all met at ſet times, and their fixed *Sacrifices*, *Prayers*, and *Religious performances*, wherein they all joyned at their meetings. And therefore, as this exerciſe of Religion muſt be *Publick*, ſo muſt it be,

2. *Univerſal.* The Father naturally cares for the welfare of every Child; Gods *Providence* is over all his Creatures for their good; And it is the care of his *Deputies*, to provide for the welfare and happineſs of all their Subjects.

Now

Now if *Religion* be the only thing that can make men happy (as it is proved) the Governour cannot compaſs his End (which is, *to procure the happineſs of his Subjects*) but by enjoyning the *Exerciſe* of Religion to be Univerſal.

CHAP. IV.

Our Governours of our Church of England *have done well to injoyn every Believing Subject, an open Profeſſion of his Faith in his reſpective Congregation.*

The particulars incident to this Head are Four.

I. *We are to conſider and agree what* FAITH *is.*
II. *That of that* Faith *there ought to be Profeſſion.*
III. *That* Profeſſion *ought to be made by every Believer.*
IV. *This is to be done in reſpective Congregations.*

SECT. I.

1. OUr *Governours* are not only as Gods Deputies, under the *Law of Nature*, to injoyn their *Subjects* the Care of *Religion*, but as Deputies of Chriſt under a more *perfect*

Law, revealed by him in this laſt diſpenſation, to injoyn their Subjects the right Exerciſe of true Religion preſcribed in the *Goſpel*, which he publiſhed to fulfil the Law of Nature, that man might come to that Happineſs for which he was created and deſigned. And this I underſtand to be the moſt proper Notion of *Faith*, *viz.* The true Religion well ordered, and rightly modified by *Goſpel* Rules, by the right Exerciſe whereof we worſhip and ſerve God acceptably; ſo that *whatſoever is not of Faith is ſin*, and *without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.*

For being Baptized into the obedience of the Goſpel, of which obedience *Baptiſm* repreſents our Profeſſion, we ought to have a firm Perſwaſion of the goodneſs and reaſonableneſs, not only of the Duties in the Goſpel preſcribed, but of our *conformity* to thoſe Preſcriptions, for the carrying on that true and undefiled Religion wherewith God is well pleaſed.

So that *Faith* is the Goſpel grace, that *teacheth us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*, *and to live holily*, *righteouſly and ſoberly in this preſent world.* And *Believing* is a comprehenſive Duty, and ſignifies not only a tacit aſſent to Evangelical Rules, as *true* and *warrantable*, as a barren act of the Underſtanding; but a firm election and perſwaſion of theſe Rules as *good* and *comfortable*, and implies a firm purpoſing and reſolving of a total *Goſpel Obedience.*

I heartily pity and bewail, the *differences* and *diſtances* that are to be ſeen among Profeſſed Believers in this Nation; and, upon ſerious Conſideration

ration, I fully perſwade my ſelf, there is nothing contributes more to the being and continuance of our *Diviſion*, than a general raſhneſs and injudiciouſneſs; When men run away with ſome ſudden *partial Notions*, and *ſlight Apprehenſions* of things of great neceſſity, and deſerved eſteem in the World; and do not ſeriouſly and diſcurſively make a right Judgment, and agree of the full ſenſe and meaning of them as they import.

To inſtance in ſome few particulars, which is eaſie for any to obſerve.

The *Goſpel*, moſt ſay, they highly eſteem; and yet we cannot but obſerve, that moſt ſnatch and run away with it as a *promiſe of Mercy*, but never regard it as a *rule of Duty*, and direction of an holy life.

The *two Sacraments* are Seals of the Covenant betwixt God and us; and moſt men are very heedful at Receiving them, that God may ſeal to them *Remiſſion of ſins*, and never regard that at the ſame time they covenant under Seal, to yield *Obedience* to God.

The *Blood of Chriſt* is precious, and its ſhedding to be had in everlaſting remembrance; but when moſt men moſt ſolemnly remember it, this Conſideration contents them, *That Chriſts Blood was ſhed for our Redemption, for remiſſion of ſins, to reconcile God to man, &c.* When we ſhould think how this *Blood-ſhedding* was, That men might be reconciled to God, and be redeemed from an *unclean converſation*, and by this ſprinkling be ſanctified and *purged from dead works to ſerve the living God*, Heb. 9. 13, 14.

Graces and *gifts of the Spirit* we juſtly value and admire; but is it not too apparent men are taken up with gifts of *Edification*, and paſs by gifts and true grace of *Sanctification*; ſo that if a man be but ready in a Scripture phraſe, hath gotten a voluble Tongue, a round expreſſion, &c. he gets the name and repute of a *Saint* immediately. But the exerciſe of *Piety* and *Charity*, which are the certain evidences of true Sanctity; Theſe things ſtand by neglected and deſpiſed.

I might inſtance in ſeveral things that we frame the ſame Conſideration of. If we give God but a piece of a Duty, we think a *maimed* and *imperfect ſacrifice* will content him, and expiate and ſatisfie him, and excuſe all our defects and enormities; and with groſs miſtakes we ſee evidently men delude and deceive themſelves in this untoward generation.

And although in many things our *miſtakes* of theſe ſorts haſten our irreligious *miſcarriages*, yet in nothing are they more manifeſt than in the nature of *Faith*. From all Chriſtians that make any profeſſion of the true Religion, we ſhall hear theſe pretences, That *they live by Faith*, *walk by Faith*, *are juſtified by Faith*, *are ſaved by Faith*, *&c.* And yet for all this noiſe we hear of theſe things, we can ſee but few that make a true judgment, or have a right underſtanding of the full meaning of the *real Faith in Chriſt*, or *Faith of the Goſpel*.

Its undeniably true, that without believing that ſupernatural Truth of *Chriſts Merits* for our pardon and remiſſion of ſins, there can be no *peace* for

for men, but they must die and consume in the *guilt* of their Transgressions. It is certainly true, that Christ our *High Priest* put away sins by the sacrifice of himself: but when Christ our designed Mediatour was *King* and *Prophet* as well as Priest. It is not barely a fruitless relying, or a lazy recumbency on Christs Merits, as our *Priest* only; but our believing his Laws and Directions he left his Church, as a *King*: the observing his Counsels and Injunctions he gave as a *Prophet*, is necessary to make up that *Faith*, which will bring us to the *end of our Hope*, *which is the salvation of our souls.*

It's undeniably true, that in the Gospel are given exceeding great and precious Promises of *Mercies* and *Salvation*, upon which God hath caused us to hope; yet when these Promises are not *absolute* but *conditional*, upon our conformity to those Rules of Duty that are prescribed, unless we be carried on to the practice of those things required, that pertain to life and godliness, we cannot be rationally concluded to have that *Faith* in the Gospel in us, which will certainly bring us to that *happiness* which we openly design and expect.

And, upon a serious inquiry, we cannot conclude any of the *Theological Graces* to be truly infused into any man, unless they discover themselves by their operations. *Love* is practical, and works, where seated, a care of keeping Commandements. *Hope* is purifying; He that hath hope of heaven is *heavenly*, and *purifieth himself as God is pure*: And *Faith* it self works by *Love*, and Love by *Obedience.*

This then is that *precious Faith* we ſhould contend for, as becometh Saints. In this we ſhould ſtrive to continue in, grounded and ſetled, and not be moved away from the Hope of the Goſpel.

All theſe things are premiſed, that the Reader may eaſily conclude, what we plainly underſtand by that *Faith* which the Ruler hath religiouſly injoyned, and the Subject is bound willingly to maintain, namely, *a ſincere and a firm purpoſe of mind, of adhering and conforming to the Rules of the Goſpel, by a total Obedience.*

He that Believes thus ſhall not be aſhamed, when *Faith* makes him have reſpect to all Evangelical Commandments.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of this Faith there muſt be Profeſſion.

NAturally we are to look of our ſelves as related to Society, ſo that of our internal Piety there muſt be an external ſignification, intending not only Gods glory by ſetling our private Peace, but by promoting our Neighbours good and edification. So that as care muſt be had by us of *Religion*, ſo of its *Exerciſe*; and as of *Faith*, ſo of *Profeſſion* of Faith. And this is required by the Goſpel evidently, when it is injoyn'd, That *Chriſt be confeſſed before men*; that all that by *Baptiſm* are conſecrated to the obedience of the Goſpel, *hold faſt the Profeſſion of their faith without wavering.*

Ὁμολογία is ſometimes rendered *Confeſſion*, ſometimes *Profeſſion*, in that they agree either of them, it is frankly and openly to declare what we hold in matters of *Religion*, to juſtifie and bear witneſs to any *Truth* of the Goſpel, be they either *ſupernatural* or *natural* Priviledges or Mercies promiſed, or Services or Duties injoyn'd; yea, the *offering the ſacrifice of Praiſe to God continually*, that is, the fruit of our Lips, is explained by an Holy Author to be Ὁμολογία, *Heb.*13.15. a *giving thanks*, or *confeſſing* to his Name.

Profeſſion of Faith we underſtand to be, a voluntary and open declaring (amidſt the Society in which incorporated) of our free and full conſent in believing the Goſpel, not only the *Mercies* pro-

miſed, but *Duties* injoyn'd, and that we aſſent to them all, not only as true and infallible, but alſo as good and comfortable; and a declaring of our deſires, ſtudy and care to obſerve them accordingly.

An expreſs ſignifying of *Profeſſion of Faith*, is, a declaring of our reſolution of Evangelical Obedience, our aſſenting and adhering to the right Exerciſe of true Religion as preſcribed in the Goſpel.

The work of *Faith* and *Religion* is not wholly to be done within, but many *externals* are neceſſary and eſſential, for conſtituting a viſible Church, ſhe is to be *a light upon an Hill.*

Every *Believer* is to ſhine as *lights in the World, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation*, and that can only diſcern *Externals.* Therefore the Believers *outward* carriage and deportment, and converſe muſt be ſo ordered like *lights*, to the inlightning and warming the blind and benummed World.

Outwardly we are to manage our ſelves, as we may direct, ſtrengthen, and comfort our Neighbour, *Poverty of ſpirit, hungring and thirſting after Righteouſneſs, Purity of heart, &c.* Theſe are Duties of the firſt rank, and primarily to be taken care of, to preſent our ſelves ſo as to be approved by our God. *Theſe ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.*

For there be many *external Duties* neceſſary for Communion, amidſt the ſociety of the Faithful, that muſt not be omitted and refuſed, as *Preaching* and *hearing* the Word; *Adminiſtring* and *receiving* the

the Sacraments; *meeting* and *aſſembling* together in thoſe Aſſemblies; mutual *exhortations* and *provocation* to good Works; *confeſſion* of Sins, of Thanks; declared *reſolutions* as well as *deſires* of Holineſs, and other Duties; all comprehended in *profeſſion of Faith.* Theſe are all *External*, yea, are all Goſpel Duties, and have been, and will be uſed in the Church of Chriſt.

Thus the Church of God among the *Jews*, that met at the Ark and Temple in *Jeruſalem*, *The Tribes went up, for the Teſtimony of* Iſrael, *to give thanks to the Name of the Lord*; and theſe were *External.*

Thus the Church of Chriſt, united under the faith of the Goſpel, had their *Praying*, *preaching* the new Law, *ſinging* of Hymns, while Chriſt continued on Earth amongſt them: And when gone up to Heaven, *they continued in Aſſembling, and breaking of Bread, and Prayers.* They had their Liturgies and publick Adminiſtrations, not only in works of *Charity* but works of *Piety.* They had their ſacrifices of *Praiſe*, the fruit of their lips, and *giving thanks to the Name of the Lord.* They had their *propheſying at Church* at *Corinth*, and what was to be done by the Church on Earth. They had *Viſions* of the Examples to lead them, from the Angels both in Earth and Heaven. Neither can a viſible Church or Society think to be continued without *open profeſſion* and *declaration.*

And in the *Goſpel*; They that worſhipped God in their *ſpirits*, were ready to bow their *knees* to him. They that *knew* God, made their *acknowledgment.*

ledgment. They that believed in their heart, for their *Righteouſneſs*, made *confeſſion* with their mouths, to help on their own and others *ſalvation.*

Thus by Preſidents of *Saints* on *Earth*, and *Angels* in *Heaven*, the Goſpel of Chriſt doth lead his Church as the Law of Nature directs it, not only to Religion but its *exerciſe*, nor the Goſpel only to Faith, but the *profeſſion* of Faith; that every Member united to that viſible Society of *Believers*, muſt *hold the profeſſion of his Faith without wavering.*

And there's the next particular; The injunction of what both *Nature* and the *Goſpel* directs us unto, is not unlawful but neceſſary, and both require that of our Faith we ſhould make *Profeſſion*; and it is very good, that *Rulers* from their *Subjects* require the ſame.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Every particular Believing Subject ought to be injoyn'd to this open profession of Faith.

PRofeſſion of *Faith* is an eſſential of the viſible Church, and none can be concluded in the Judgment of men, of the viſible Church, that doth not make profeſſion of Faith.

The *viſible Church* is not a Company but a Society, and what makes the Society a *Church* is profeſſion of Faith. Every one is to evidence himſelf of this Society; if he will claim right to the *Priviledges* of a Society, he muſt perform the *offices* and *duties*, and be diligent in the Miniſtration of the Society.

A Miniſter may gather a Company, but he cannot gather a Church, nor make them to be ſo by his own ſingle confeſſion. Every man that will approve himſelf of the Church, muſt not only give a tacit, but an expreſs conſent by an open *Profeſſion*. This is neceſſary for conſtituting every man in *Church-membership*, and this is rationally required and injoyn'd of Chriſtian Governours, to their Believing Subjects, for their own and Subjects ſatisfaction.

This concerns the whole Congregation, and is to be done not only by the *Clergy* but *Laity*, not only *Prieſt* but *People*, not only *Men* but *Women*, nor only they that are grown up, but *Children*. *Out of the mouth of Babes and Sucklings*, God thus hath his

his *praiſe* perfected; and in his Temple, when met for Gods worſhip, *every one muſt ſpeak for his Honour*, of ſuch as have received the Faith of the Goſpel.

And this we are led unto by the eminent Examples of *Angels* and *Saints*, who ſerved and pleaſed God, that Church triumphant in Heaven. Thus when we knew not where we were, before the foundations of the Earth were laid, every Angel ſignified his *conſent* and *delight*, he had in the enjoyment of God; *Job* 38.7. *All thoſe Morning Stars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy.* No Dignity exempted any of thoſe from Duty; They all ſang together, they all ſhouted together for joy.

And the multitude of that heavenly Hoſt, that appeared to the *Shepheards*, commended this practice to every particular Saint, it being obſerved and recorded for an imitation, that every one was *praiſing God, and ſaying, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men*, Luke 2.13,14.

And the *Viſion* that St. *John* recorded, that glorious Divine that now is equal if not above Angels, is for direction and imitation of us, and others, to the end of the World; and what he heard, *Revel.* 5. 11,12,13. *And I beheld and heard the voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the Beaſts, and the Elders, and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſand of thouſands, crying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, &c. and every Creature which is in Heaven heard I ſaying, Bleſſing, Honour, Glory and Power, &c.* Certainly this was recorded to inſtruct us, that this ought to be the *duty* of every particular Saint on Earth, which does the

work

work of every *Saint* and *Angel* in Heaven. That every man of Christs Temple below, as well as of that above, should speak to his Honour, set forth his Praise.

And thus they thought it, and practiced the *Apostles* and *Disciples* of Christ in their first meeting, who made confession of their Faith in that Article of the Resurrection, *Luke* 24. 33, 34. not only the *Eleven*, but *they that were with them were saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.* The Disciples come from *Emmaus*, were they silent? *They told what things were done in the way, and how he was known by breaking of Bread.* And thus they continued speaking till *Christ* came among them.

Acts 13. 2,3. the Church met together at *Antioch*, and there we find them met at their Liturgy; there was a *publick* ministration they all agreed in: That *ministring* was not touching the People, then it would have been τῷ λαῷ, but it was τῷ Κυρίῳ, something done for Gods honour and service, and it was *Fasting* and *Praying*.

To instance in one more, 1 *Cor.* 14. 24. they were all *Prophesying*. In their holy Assemblies at *Corinth* the Apostle St. *Paul* supposeth, that there was a business they were all imployed in; it is set forth in the word *Prophesying*, what can we in reason understand by that word? Sure it was not *Preaching*, for if all were preaching, who could be hearing. It was not *fore-telling things to come*; this was given about that time to some extraordinarily, upon the plentiful effusion of the Spirit, but not commonly or generally to every Believer. It was not extatical effusion from *gifts of Tongue*, given to all to speak; that was not given to all, and the Unbeliever

liever, if he upon his coming in had found them all thus buſied would have accounted them mad; but Laity and Clergy Women as well as men might be imployed in this *Propheſying*.

But this work every Believer was buſie about, it muſt be therefore ſome open and plain declaration, either of ſome Article or Articles of *Religion*, or ſome acknowledgment of the *divine Perfections*, or ſome ſpeaking freely in *praiſing* of God, or *praying* unto him; for they were publickly miniſtring to the Lord, they were falling down and worſhipping him, as the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth, *that* (being convinced by the joynt actual concurrence of every Believer) *the Unbeliever coming in*, would *fall down and worſhip God with them, ſaying, of a truth God was in the midſt of them.*

He ſuppoſeth it done by the Believers and Saints at *Corinth*, what he deſired might be done by the Saints at *Jeruſalem*; that they did not decline their Aſſembling themſelves together for *Religious* purpoſes, nor in their Aſſembling did any one decline the *profeſſion* of his Faith, which every one was to hold faſt without wavering.

In probability there was ſome Liturgy they agreed in at *Corinth*, as there was among the Believers at *Jeruſalem*, and at *Antioch* and *Alexandria*, and every Believer accounted himſelf obliged to give his attendance on it, and joynt concurrence with it, to the *honour* and *worſhip* of God. Every one offered a Sacrifice not *private* or *mental*, which was not diſcernable by man, but *vocal*, the fruit of his lips, and Unbeliever might ſenſibly perceive it; and this tended to the ſervice of God though *external*,

ternal, and well they were assured, that *with such Sacrifices* (which was every Christians duty to offer) when they were offered, *God was well pleased.*

Thus every Believer by the practice of the Church of Christ, in purest times, is led to *profession of Faith*, and I appeal to any mans Reason or Experience to determine, if he be a Christian, whether upon a wilful omission of this Duty any true Believer can rest satisfied.

For if I be a sincere Believer, I can never satisfie my self, unless, as I owe, so I give all unto Gods glory: The Hypocrite will to his power keep back something, but the Christian which is sincerely *holy* will give all. He knows and considers that his Body is *created, redeemed, sanctified*, and shall be *glorified*, to *present them a living sacrifice to God, is but reasonable service.* That it is not a *gift* but a *debt*, he owes and is bound to pay, that as with his Soul he is to *know* God and *love* him, so he is to offer his Tongue to *praise* God, and his Body to *worship* him.

But if I be diligent in the *Profession* of my Faith, I forthwith feel a content and satisfaction attending and accompanying my *holy* imployments, and a delightful *pleasantness* spreads it self over my Soul, while my Body is busied in *religious* exercises. Its the most *relishing* meat and drink for Gods Children thus to do their Fathers will, and these *Services* are their greatest freedom. Those that are beloved of God, and after his own heart, feel their Souls *satisfied as with marrow and fatness*, while their Mouths *freely praise him with joyful lips.*

No

No ſuch *full content* as in thoſe exerciſes of Godlineſs, which hath the greateſt profeſſion of *delight* in this life, and the moſt certain expectation of thoſe *full joyes* that are to come.

Thus we moſt pleaſe our ſelves, and we beſt ſatisfie our Neighbours, in whatſoever Relation he reſpects us in the practice of *Holineſs*, which directly tends to true Happineſs. Our *Father*, the *Magiſtrate*, the *Miniſter*, our *Equals*, are all ſolicitous to know and be aſſured of our *pious* and *holy* inclinations; and when they can perceive they have not watched over us nor laboured in vain, they are moſt delighted and beſt pleaſed.

Now our Relations are not to be ſatisfied in the ſtate we are in, with probable conjectures of our meanings and intentions, but they muſt have clear and ſignificant expreſſion of our minds and intendments, either by *words* or *actions*.

A ſullen *ſilence* cannot content us in our Contracts, but we muſt have ſenſible aſſurance of our mutual *aſſent* or *refuſal*. In our Secular Trafficks and Commerces, we cannot carry on our Bargains but by external ſignification: And as in *Temporal* ſo in *Spiritual* Covenants, there is a neceſſity of theſe things when no communion can be held without them. We cannot be mutually pleaſed with mutual aſſurances of our purpoſes, to ſtand firm to the Faith of the Goſpel, without an open *declaration*; unleſs every one *hold* forth *the profeſſion of his Faith without wavering*.

There can be no contenting aſſurance of any perſons continuing a Member of a viſible Church, without *profeſſion of Faith* in Service or Sacrament;

Hearing

Hearing the Word preach'd only is no ſufficient evidence; I am in charity to believe the *Miniſter* to be a good man, becauſe he ſignifies his pious intentions by Religious expreſſions: But I cannot in reaſon conclude the Hearer ſo long as he ſaies nothing. If People wanted nothing but *Knowledge*, *Converſion*, or *Faith*, if *ignorant* or *unconverted*, I could excuſe this *boulimy* among us, and it were far more tolerable that people mind only Sermons: But when People are *knowing* and *converted*, *baptized* and *ingaged* in Profeſſion, certainly it were more truly Religious to ſpend ſome time in *doing* as well as *hearing*, to ſhew they have not heard in vain, but that they have got this *Faith* they ſo greedily heard for, by holding forth the *profeſſion* of it.&c.

By Hearing conſtantly, I in charity conclude thou deſireſt to be good, thou wouldſt get *Faith*; but if *Hearing* is all, how can I without raſhneſs judge that thou art *good*, or haſt got *Faith*, which is not evident to me without thy *Profeſſion*.

It is a painted, no real Fire, that hath neither *light* nor *heat*: It is a Stock, a Log, not a living Tree, that hath neither *leaves* nor *fruit*: It is a Carkaſs, not a living Body, that hath neither *words* nor *motion*: It is Preſumption, and no living Faith, that is not ſignified by *Profeſſion*.

And now with all meekneſs, I beſeech thoſe that ſeparate from us, ſeriouſly to conſider this undoubted Truth, That the viſible certain ſign of any Companies or Perſons, being indeed of the Catholick Church that is Militant, is the Peoples *Confeſſion of Faith* in Service and Sacraments.

Since therefore *Profeſſion of Faith* is of ſuch neceſſity, and hath ſo great an influence to pleaſe both our ſelves and others, and is a duty and ſervice, by Goſpel Rules, incumbent to every Chriſtian, we may truly conclude, That the Chriſtian Magiſtrate may and ought to injoyn *an open Profeſſion of Faith* to each believing Subject in his reſpective Congregation.

SECT. IV.

Every one is to make profeſſion of his Faith, and the beſt time and place to do it in, are in reſpective Congregations, and the Magiſtrate is to injoyn every one, &c.

4. THat there ſhould be meeting and aſſembling of Congregations, muſt be adjudged expedient and neceſſary for the imparting and promoting what is good and comfortable, and the preventing or removing of what is hurtful or inconvenient, which things cannot be hoped for, or compaſſed, by *Singularity* or *Separation*. And, that this is confeſſed, is evident from the general practice of all Cities and Nations that profeſſed any Religion, were it true or falſe, and by the practice of ordinary Men, without any reſpect to Religion, who agree to meet in *Markets*, *Fairs*, *Exchanges*, *Walks*, for Temporal ends above-ſaid.

And

And if general Meetings be rationally concluded, to be neceſſary for imparting things *Temporal*, then they muſt be concluded alſo natural and neceſſary for imparting things *Spiritual*.

And for any one wilfully and perverſly to decline theſe Meetings, lawfully appointed, muſt be a ſin, being prohibited by the Goſpel, when the *Hebrews* are commanded not to *forſake the Aſſembling of themſelves together, as the manner of ſome is*, *Heb.*10.25. becauſe ſuch Meetings are appointed and deſigned to advance the exerciſe of Piety and Religion.

Such Congregations of *Believers* as reſpect the Worſhip and Service of God, are the Congregations we mean, and the Believer is to diſcharge his duty of *Profeſſion* in the midſt of them.

God, *Nature* and *Grace*, doth not delight to do any thing in vain, and all voluntary Agents freeſt exert their kindly operations upon ſuch Objects, as may be influenttal upon them for good, and are in capacity to receive the ſaid Operations.

Confeſſion of Faith is not expected, when not called to it, to be made to *Perſecutors*, or *Infidels*, that are profeſſed enemies of the Goſpel: where there is more probability of their *Rage*, than *Converſion*, and where there is no hope of advancing Gods *glory*, or our Neighbours *good*; where there is leſs hope of dying a *Martyr*, than danger of being a Manſlayer, where he may ſeem to conſpire with the *Perſecutors* to take away his own life.

*Mat.*7.6. By Chriſts own direction, we are not to caſt *holy things to dogs*, nor *pearls to ſwine*, leaſt

they trample them under foot, and turn again and rent you. But holy things are properly tendred to holy Men. Our delight to communicate these should be chiefly to the *Saints* of the Earth, and such as pretend at least a desire to excel in vertue; yea, where we may act with *safety* to our selves, and probably with *benefit* to others, there *Confession of Faith* is best made, and that if among a Congregation of Believers.

And for any that stupidly or sottishly sit at home, soaking and smoaking in their Chimney Corners securely, indulging the *sensual* part, and never regard but slight the opportunities of Meetings conveniently, and communicating of holy *apprehensions* and *affections*, for their own and Neighbours comfort. We must look upon them as an *unnatural* sort of Men, and the most lazy kind of the beasts of the people, who industriously study to be useless, and to neglect their own and the general good of the Neighbourhood, which they are obliged to further and maintain. And, if they have sharp *goads* and *lashes*, to prick them or quicken them vigorously to move under that yoke to which they are naturally bound, it is no more than what is just and reasonable, for the good and welfare of the Community, which every particular *Officer* and *Ruler* are concerned to promote and advance.

For *Time* and *Place* of Meeting, that these be determined by the wisdom of the Governours, upon Convenience, as best conducing for the *publick good* of the Society, are things so unquestionable, as I think will meet with no opposition.

Now

Now, that every Chriſtian is bound to attend theſe Congregations, to advance *Religion*, and propagate the *general good*; he hath loſt his Reaſon as well as Religion that dares deny it.

For what things we find experimentally, either to be believed or done, to be good and comfortable to ones ſelf, we ought to impart and communicate to the good of others; and what St. *Paul* deſired to ſee his Brethren, *Rom.* 11. ſo we ſhould put in practice, as near as we can, to impart ſome *Spiritual gifts*, that we may be comforted together with them, by the mutual *faith* both of them and our ſelves.

For *Temporal* things, ſuch is our unhappy neceſſity and the baſeneſs of the things, as if we would have any good to our ſelves, we muſt have a particular propriety in them and injoyment of them. The more we give others, the leſs we injoy to our ſelves.

But for *Spiritual* things, the commoner the better; as there ought not, ſo there needs not of them be deſired an appropriation; our *propriety* is not loſt by *Communication*. Theſe things like ſeeds, they multiply by *ſcattering*, as fire kindles by *blowing*, ſo our *Faith* increaſes by *Confeſſion*. *Draw me and we will run after thee.* Holy Souls, when drawn to good things, would have others *good* with them; not ſo ſelfiſh to run alone, but call others to bear them company. *Andrew* calls *Peter*, *Philip Nathaniel*, to come to Chriſt. *David* would have the *Tribes* go up to the *Houſe of the Lord*, to bear teſtimony with him, and give thanks with him, &c.

And when with him, there he would have others *ſing* with him, *rejoyce* with him, *fall down* with him, *worſhip* with him.

So the Author to the *Hebrews*; not *forſake meeting*, nor in their meeting *mutual Exhortation*, *offering Sacrifice*, *Thanksgiving*, *Profeſſion of Faith*, none excepted or excluded. Every one, without injury to himſelf, may help on his Neighbour, by *exerciſe of Religion*, and *profeſſion of Faith*.

And certainly, the declaring and publiſhing of our firm aſſent, and ſoundneſs of *Faith* and *Devotion*, muſt help on the *reſolution*, and ſettle the *conſtancy* of others in the ſame things. Thus are we props and ſtaies to our ſtaggering and ſinking Brethren; and others waxing ſtrong in the Lord, and being ſtrengthned and confirmed in their Faith, grow confident in their Profeſſion alſo. And *when thou art* thy ſelf *converted*, thou oughteſt alſo to *ſtrengthen thy Brethren*.

Thus we blow up the coals of *Devotion*, and kindle that *Piety* that breaks out into an *heavenly flame*, to the inlightning and warming both our ſelves and our Neighbours. Thus we *ſhine as lights in the World*.

While all agree, and every one is intent in the Congregation on this *Confeſſion*, we ſtand directly under the influx of Grace. It is the probable way, when we are all thus imployed, to have Chriſt come and make one of the Company. While in *Via*, like the two Diſciples going to *Emmaus*, while we are thus communing, *Jeſus* may draw near and go with us. While we are thus ſpeaking, no doubt but Chriſt is ready to ſtand in the midſt of us,

and

and ſay, *peace be unto us*; for ſo he hath promiſed, and he is faithful, *That when two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the midſt of them.*

With this general *Preaching* and *Miniſtring* uſually goes along the *miniſtration* of the Spirit. And, whoſoever would not quench or ſtint the *Spirit* in this operation to *Holineſs*, he ought not to neglect or deſpiſe this kind of Propheſying.

It is a probable way, in the Apoſtles Judgment, to work upon thoſe that are *without the Church*, and *unconverted*, 1 *Cor.*14.24,25. when every one, and all in a believing Congregation are thus *Propheſying*, ſpeaking freely, and preaching and confeſſing Gods *Excellencies* and *Perfections*, and ſhew our ſelves reverencing him and believing in him; when an *Heathen* or *Infidel* come into ſuch a Congregation, *He will fall down and worſhip God alſo*, being convinced of the *reaſonableneſs*, *neceſſity* and *benefit* of the duty, by our reſpective Harmony and Uniformity, he will ſay, *of a truth, verily God is in the midſt of us.*

He is worſe than *Saul*, that will not thus *propheſie among the Prophets*, and ſeeing others unanimouſly and devoutly *worſhipping* and *confeſſing* to God, who will not fall down and worſhip God alſo.

And while thus like *Elijah*, we are riding up to Heaven in the Chariots of this *holy fire*, it is not improbable that others like *Eliſha*, ſtanding by, may have the ſame *Spirit* reſting upon them.

Thus every one that aims at the general *good* of himſelf and others, be they within the Church, or be they without the Church, is obliged to an *open*

profession of Faith, in that respective Congregation to which he is associated, that he may be instrumental to draw others to the worship of our glorious God, who before perhaps little regarded him.

And that *Governours*, that are to aim at the general good of the Society, should injoyn every *believing Subject* to a duty so extensively beneficial, is so clear that it needs no further demonstration.

In Fine, Our *Governours*, as *Christs* Deputies, who are to Rule by Christs new Law, the *Gospel*, have done well to injoyn to their Believing *Subjects* an open *profession of Faith* in their respective Congregations. And, that this Profession ought to be signified by an open *Uniformity*, is our next undertaking.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

In ſuch Congregations Unity of Faith ought to be ſignified by an open Uniformity.

Section,

I. *In a Catholick Church there muſt be Unity.*
II. *In particular Congregations there ought to be Unity of Faith.*
III. *That Unity of Faith ought to be ſignified by an open Uniformity.*

SECT. I.

In a Catholick Church there muſt be Unity.

THE Nature of the *Church* of God is beſt repreſented and deciphered unto us under the reſemblance of a Body; As many *Members* make one Body, ſo many *Believers* make one Church. By ſeveral *Nerves* and *Sinews* the ſeveral

ſeveral Members are compacted into one Body. By ſeveral Laws of the *Goſpel*, as ſo many *Ligaments*, the ſeveral Believers are fitly joyned together into one Church; and as many Members compacted by the ſame *Nerves* are enlivened and guided by *one* Soul, ſo many Believers joyned together by the ſame *Laws* are quickned and govern'd by *one* Spirit. *For the Body is not one member but many: For by one Spirit, we are all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* Thus we believe *one Holy Ghoſt*, and *one Catholick Church.*

In *Scripture* and *Fathers* many other Figures and Repreſentations we meet of the *Church* of Chriſt, which all ſpeak the neceſſity of *Unity* of ſeveral parts for its Conſtitution. Sometimes we find it compared to *Noahs Ark*, as *Extra Arcam ſo Extra Eccleſiam nulla ſalus*: In thoſe great inundations of *ſin* and *miſery*, wherewith the Earth is overſpread, as once out of the *Ark*, ſo now out of the *Church* there can ordinarily be expected no Salvation. The *Ark* was cemented within and without with *Pitch*, and the *Church* with *Charity*. Sometimes they have likened her to a *Coat*, to *Joſephs* Coat that was *polymita*, divers coloured; to *Chriſts* Coat, *inconſutilis*, without ſeam, rents or diviſions.

In Holy Scripture, in ſeveral places, the Church of Chriſt is compared to an *Houſe* or *Temple*. Many diſtinct *ſtones*, and ſeveral pieces of *wood*, make up *one* Building, for the protection, entertainment and comfort of the Owner; ſo many *Believers* make up

up *one* living Temple, *one* ſpiritual Houſe, for Chriſt and his Spirit to dwell and delight in.

As no number of *Planks* can make up a Ship an Ark, without cloſe joynting: No multitude of *Threds* can make a warm Garment, without cloſe weaving: No *Stones* can make up an Houſe, without cloſe cementing: No *Members*. or *Parts* can make up a Body, without cloſe compacting; ſo no number of *Men* can make up a Church without *Conjunction* or *Unity*.

And this the Holy Spirit of Chriſt intimates unto us in that heavenly Song, *Cant.6.9. My love, my undefiled is but* one, *the only one of her Mother, the choice one of her that bare her*; yea, ſo we believe and ſo we teach, there is but *one Catholick Church*.

Let the *Sectaries* and *Separatiſts*, that think to drown the cry of their ſin with the noiſe of *Conſcience*; Let them boaſt vainely of their Multitudes; that every one of their Congregations, though of different Perſwaſions, is *the pure Church*; while they ſtudy to be many, and make Diviſions, they are not the true *Spouſe* and *Church* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

The Devil may have many *Synagogues*, but Chriſt hath but *one Church*, *one* Wife, *one* Spouſe, *one* Royal Prieſthood, *one* holy People, *one* People of his purchaſe. There is but *one Catholick Church*, *One* invariable from the beginning of the World, as to *Subſtantials*, and ſo will continue to the end of the ſame; and rather than there ſhould be an appearance of *two*, *Chriſt*, our Peace, *ſhed his Blood to make thoſe that ſeemed twain both one*, *and hath*

broken

broken down the middle wall of partition between us, Eph. 2. 14. *One* End, to be attained by the ſame Means. *One* People, to be governed by the ſame Laws. *One* Body, to be actuated by the ſame Spirit: Of that *one* Body, *one* Head, *one* Faith, *one* Baptiſm. *One Eve*, the Mother of all living Men: *One Church*, the Mother of all Believers.

No wonder St. *Paul* ſhould ſo pathetically beſeech the *Epheſians*, that if they would walk worthy of the Vocation whereunto they were called, that they ſhould *hold the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*.

No wonder our Bleſſed Saviour, in his laſt Agony in the *Garden*, ſhould pray ſo earneſtly for thoſe eſpecially that had received the Laws which he had given them from the Father, *that they might be* One *as they were*, John 17. 23. That all that believe on him through his word, might be made perfect in one.

If we ſee rightly, we may behold Chriſt's *Heavenly Jeruſalem*, that is incompaſſed with holy *Angels* as Walls, like a City that is compacted with the ſame Rules, as ſo many *ligaments*, and actuated with the ſame Spirit; accounts it not only good and joyful, but neceſſary for all the Members of the Society, to be joyned together in *Unity*.

It not only continues the welfare, but upholds the Conſtitution and being of the Church of Chriſt, to baniſh *Diviſion*, and hold faſt this *Unity*.

SECT.

SECT. II.

There muſt be in the Catholick Church Unity of Faith.

THus the Church of Chriſt began in the laſt Diſpenſation, and ſo it is to be continued in *Unity*: *They were all*, that were believers, *with one accord in one place: The multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and one ſoul.*

As taught of God, ſo of Chriſt they were taught *to love one another*, and *to do unto others as they would be done by*; like members of the ſame Body, mutually ſympathizing, *weeping with thoſe that wept*, and *rejoycing with thoſe that did rejoyce*; *bearing one anothers burthens*, and thus fulfilling the mind of Chriſt.

Neither had they of the Church of Chriſt a like reſpect to each others *perſons*, but the ſame reſpect to the *Objects* that were preſented before them. They did unanimouſly agree to *chuſe* and *refuſe*, to *love* and *hate* the ſame thing. They had a like *hope*, a like *fear*, the ſame *joy*, the ſame *ſorrow*: Like Travellers, tending to the ſame End, they agree to walk in the ſame way, and had the ſame *will*, the ſame *mind*, the ſame *affections*.

As they of the Chureh of Chriſt are to agree in the deſires and affections of the *appetitive* part, ſo ought they to agree in the concluſions and perſwaſions of the *intellective* part, that nobler part of the Rational Soul of man, if they will be knit into that

that Society that will hold profeſſed ſubjection to the Rules of the Goſpel. The Society of *Believers* are to agree in the ſame *Faith*, the ſame *Judgment*, the ſame *Conſcience*.

Thus St. *Paul* deſires and expects of the believing *Corinthians*, that they ſhould be perfectly joyned together, in the ſame *mind*, and in the ſame *judgment*; and of the *Epheſians*, that they ſhould *endeavour to keep the Unity of the ſpirit in the bond of Peace*, Eph. 4. 3. There being meant by *Spirit* as elſewhere, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 23. the ſuperiour faculty of the Rational Soul, the concluſions of which were to be kept one and the ſame: For but *one Body* and *one Spirit*, *even as ye are called into one hope of your calling. One Lord, One Faith, One Baptiſm. For Chriſt being aſcended, and ſet at the Right hand of God in heavenly places, and having all things put under his feet*, as Head of the Church, in it appointed ſeveral Orders, and to them gave ſeveral Gifts, for the *perfecting* of the Saints, for the *work* of the Miniſtery, for the *edifying* his Body, *till every part might come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, &c.*

Upon this Rock Chriſt hath promiſed to build his Church, meaning St. *Peters Faith.*, not his *Perſon* or *Office*. As Chriſt hath but *one* Church, ſo that one Church is founded upon *one* Rock, and that unmovable, unchangable, alwaies the ſame. The Rain may deſcend, the floods may come down, and the winds may blow, and waves of oppoſition may ſplit themſelves with their own violence; but the *Faith* of Chriſts Servants ſtand unmovable, rather

rather confirmed than hurt: The Church of Chriſt is but *One*, built upon *one* Rock.

But the *Synagogues* of Satan are built upon heaps of *Sand*: Such is their Faith (if I may ſay they have any) as is like *heaps of Sand*, whoſe forms are changed upon every preſſure, toſſed up and down with every wind, ready to receive either augmentation or diminution upon external Contingencies. They are alwaies *Changable*.

But thoſe that are truly Members of the Church of Chriſt, from an unalterable Rule, are of an *unchangable* Judgment: They are not like Children, toſſed up and down with every breath, nor carried about with diverſe and ſtrange Doctrines; but the God of hope, as he hath filled them with all joy, ſo with all *peace* and *unity* in believing. That they continue ſtedfaſt in the ſame *Faith*, are perfectly joyned together in the ſame *Judgment*; and amidſt Society of Believers, there is but *one Spirit*, *one Conſcience*.

The Head and perfection of a Rational Creatures *Unity* muſt be in *Judgment*. Beaſts may agree in *Affection*, only Men can agree in *Judgment*. And *Judgment*, *Faith* and *Conſcience* (of which there is a noiſe in the World) are but little different; All the reſult of the Souls Reaſoning, the deliberate concluſion and agreement of her Counſel from a certain Rule and infallible. A reſpect of the *Rational Creature* to the Rules of the Goſpel, not only as true and warrantable, but as good and acceptable; and a ſerious purpoſe and reſolution to conform to thoſe Rules accordingly. Of which Rules ſome are *ſupernatural* and *revealed*, others

are

are *natural*; ſome *poſitive*, but being injoyned by Chriſt they are *eternal*, *univerſal*, *indiſpenſable* and *binding* to the Catholick Church of Chriſt.

But ſome Rules are *particular*, given by Chriſtian Rulers to their particular *National Churches*, to whoſe wiſdom Chriſt hath left the ordering and injoyning of ſome *Canons*, not unlawful, for ſetling Peace. And be the *Canons* either concerning *Words* or *Actions*, ſince they are accomodately fitted to the cuſtome and apprehenſions of the People, and are ſignificant expreſſions of the Subjects Unity of *Judgment* and *Faith*: They are *binding* to believing Subjects *for the Lords ſake*.

So that as in the *Catholick Church*, for the *General Rules*, ſo in *particular Churches* for particular Commands, where lawfully fixed and unrepealed, the Believing Subjects are to be of the ſame *Faith*, of the ſame *Judgment*.

And where difference of *Faith* or *Judgments* are in the ſame conſtituted Church, impoſſible it is there ſhould be *Unity of Affection*, impoſſible it is the Souldiers and Servants ſhould be in *peace* and *Unity*, where Captains and Leaders are at *variance* and *diſſenſion*.

Liberty, or pretence of *Conſcience*, in a conſtituted Church, can never be plea ſufficient to juſtifie two differing *Believers* in differing and contrary undertakings. If one of thoſe undertakings be warrantable, the others muſt be unlawful and unwarrantable. There is but *one Conſcience*, *one Faith* in this caſe, can be juſtifiable, as certain as there is but *one Rule*, and but *one Truth*. And when two differing Believers, in differing and contrary Actions, can

can have but *one* true and juſtifiable Rule. There cannot be in contrary Actions any more than one right *Faith*, or juſtifiable *Conſcience.*

And Conſcience is *Concludens ſcientia*, a deliberate Concluſion, and ſetled Judgment, a fixed Determination of the Intellective part from a certain *infallible Rule*, from which we infer, aſſume and apply to our ſelves the morality of our Actions, and determine of the ſubſequent iſſue accordingly. So that two things are required to make up a *Conſcience* :

1. *A deliberate Determination or Concluſion.*

2. *A certain Rule from whence we infer the morality of our Actions.*

1. There muſt be a deliberate Determination in what may be called *Conſcience* ; ſo no Example or practice of the moſt retired, mortified man, can be a *Rule* for thy Conſcience. The moſt devout of men are no Lords of our *Faith*, who at the beſt are but Helpers of our joy. *Infallibility* is not to be granted to any particular man, which is not granted to any particular Church of Chriſt. Neither can *Conſcience* be made up ſoundly, from the practice of a *fallible man*, but from the law of Nature and Rules of an *Infallible God.* So that it is not to be called *Conſcience* that is grounded on the Examples of godly Religious men, without thy own Deliberation.

Nor is that *Conſcience* that hath only former *Reſolutions* for its Rule: for wilful *obſtinacy*, *timacioufneſs* of purpoſe, cannot be a part of *Conſcience*, which is not in the Appetitive part at all. Nor can *Humor*, *Animoſity*, a ſudden precipitate ingaging

be justified by plea of *Conscience*, when there must be *awareness*. Conscience cannot be without *Deliberation*; neither can Deliberation, without applying or determination, be called *Conscience*. For while the *Understanding* is fluctuating, questioning, and inquiring, it may be in tendency to it, it is not yet to be called *Conscience*.

And here again, they seem as far from Reason in their expressions, as from Obedience in their actions, that call out for liberty of Conscience, *May not my Conscience be free?* And they would make the doubting Reason against the undoubtedly lawful Command of the Superiour, in things *indifferent*, to be the weak, tender Conscience: But where *liberty* or *doubting* is, there can be no *determination* of the thing doubted, and where no determination there can be no *Conscience*.

2. That cannot be called *Conscience* that grounds not its Determination upon a certain *Rule*. When *Conscience* is but a Witness to a Rule, at the best a *subordinate Rule*; neither can it be an *absolute Law* which must be determined by a Law; without which it may be *Humor*, *Animosity*, *Fancy* or *Opinion*, whatever it is, surely it cannot rightly be called *Conscience*.

And since *Conscience* cannot be without a Rule, and when the Rules of *Nature* and the *Gospel* do not interfere, and are not contrary, there cannot be two different or contrary *Consciences* that can be both good, of any professed Believers in a constituted Church whereso'ever.

Over

Over the General *Church* of Christ there be Rules *Natural* and *Neceſſary*, whoſe *morality* is determined, and ſome Rules *Poſitive* and *Arbitrary*, that are eternally and univerſally binding to all *Believers* to the end of the World.

In all theſe Goſpel Rules, there can be but *one Conſcience* in all Believers undoubtedly.

And in every particular *Church*, ſomethings are to be determined for *Peace ſake* by the wiſdom of Governours, as *time* and *place*, *words* and *geſtures*, *&c.* in the ſervice and worſhip of God.

Now in a *Conſtituted Church* where theſe things are determined, I deliberately declare in this Subjects *ſubmiſſion*, and the others *refuſal*, there can be but *one Conſcience*. For when indifferent things are determined by wiſe and good Rulers, moſt conducing to *convenience* and *peace*, the Rule, upon ſuch *determination*, is for every Believing Subject, to *ſubmit to every Ordinance of man for the Lords ſake*.

Now when no *Conſcience* can be without a Rule, ſince I have a Rule for my *Submiſſion*, and thou canſt ſhew no Rule thou haſt for thy *Refuſal*, certainly it muſt be concluded, I have a Conſcience in my *willing ſubjection*, but thou canſt have no Conſcience in thy *wilful omiſſion* and *oppoſition*. And being there is but *one Rule* that is good and warrantable in all *poſitive* things, there can be, to ſpeak properly, in ſuch things, but *one Conſcience*.

For *Reſolutions*, if without, yea much more if againſt a Rule, cannot be called *Conſcience*. And

Conſcience, which is συνοίδησις, muſt have a double look, the firſt look it muſt caſt on the *Rule*, the ſecond it muſt caſt on the *Actions*, be they either neceſſary or poſitive, or elſe it cannot be counted *Conſcience*; and from thy agreeing or diſagreeing with the *Rule*, ſo thy *Conſcience* accuſeth or excuſeth accordingly.

And now I appeal to any ſober mans Conſideration, ſince there cannot be contrary *Rules* juſtifiable, whether there can be contrary *Conſciences*. Certainly then, we may ſafely conclude in all *Conſtituted Churches*, ſince for Belivers actions there is but *one Truth*, but *one true Rule*; there muſt be for all ſuch Believers but *one right Faith*, there can be but *one ſound Conſcience*.

SECT.

SECT. III.

In ſuch Conſtituted Societies, Unity of Faith muſt be ſignified by an open Uniformity.

GOD, who created man for his glory, deſigned him for Society, that what comfort he could not get by *ſeparation*, he might compaſs by *Communion*. And Communion, in the ſtate we are in, cannot be maintained but by *Externals*, by Bodily offices. As the Communion of the Inviſible Church muſt be maintained by *Unity of Faith*, ſo the Communion of the Viſible Church, or any part that is aſſociated or united in obedience to the Faith, muſt be maintained by *agreement in the exerciſe of Religion*, and *Unity of Profeſſion*.

And this Unity of Profeſſion is properly called *Uniformity*, which is nothing elſe but a ſenſible form of an united Society agreeing in *one Profeſſion*, both in words and actions:

So if any one ſhould ask, *What is the ſign or mark by which we may know a viſible Church by, or any aſſociated Company to be a part of it.* I muſt properly Anſwer, *by Uniformity.*

And *Uniformity*, as the word clearly ſpeaks, is an *Unity* of the *outward form* of things, or an agreement of *viſible practice*, and *joynt concurrence* in the Exerciſe of Religion, both in *words* and *actions*; which ought to be in every Congregation of Believers. Preaching of the Goſpel, and re-

ceiving the Sacrament, of the *People* as well as of the *Miniſter*, being indiſpenſable ſigns of every one that would be accounted of the Church of Chriſt.

And firſt, we will undertake to prove, that *Unity of Faith* muſt be ſignified by *Uniformity of words*; and this is not only lawful, but neceſſary and uſeful.

1. *Lawful*, as declared by the practice of all Nations that had a ſenſe of Religion. For if *Heathen*, yet reaſonably they agreed in the ſame Feſtivals and Solemnities, in the ſame Sacrifices and Geſtures, in the ſame forms of Thankſgivings and Devotion; which, becauſe written of by many, and confeſſed by all, it will be needleſs to cite Authors, or any further to inſiſt upon the proof of it; no queſtion but they Univerſally agreed in conſtituting and maintaining *Uniformity* amidſt their Aſſemblies in all Religious obſervances.

If they were a People to whom God had more clearly manifeſted himſelf, and the true *Religion*, wherewith he would be well pleaſed, theſe marks they gave of their aſſociating and uniting into a Church, by their *Univerſal joynt concurrence* in *Religious Exerciſes*, in all Ages, in their ſolemn Congregations.

And it is facile to prove, that among the *Jews* they judged the fitteſt Medium to preſerve *Unity*, was *Eccleſiaſtical Uniformity* from their coming out of *Egypt*, till their diſſolution in *Canaan*. And in ſome meaſure the *Jews* maintain this to this day, in their ſeveral Congregations.

They

They had their ſet Forms for *Aaronical* Benediction, for *hymns*, and *praiſes*, and *prayers* of the People, who agreed in one expreſs aſſent to the *Covenant* and the *Law* delivered by *Moſes*; in the ſame *Sabbaoths* and *Feſtivals*, in the ſame *Sacraments* and Ties of *Obedience*.

They agreed in the ſame *Prayers* compoſed by *Jewiſh* Teachers for their Diſciples. St. *John* the *Baptiſt* taught his Diſciples to *pray*. And *Chriſt*'s Diſciples in the laſt diſpenſation, would be taught of him to *pray*, *as John* before had *taught his Diſciples*. And our bleſſed Saviour not only taught his Diſciples a *Form* but a *Prayer*, which they were to ſay. *When you pray, ſay*, Luke 11. 2. *Our Father, &c.*

To follow him can be no miſtake. Certainly, deliberate Compoſures of *Set Forms*, from Chriſts Example, receive not only Toleration, but ſufficient Approbation.

And that the *Apoſtles* and their Succeſſors, in Primitive times, uſed this Prayer in all their holy Adminiſtrations, eſpecially at the Sacraments we have more than probable Authority.

And that the Church had *ſet Forms* after the firſt Century, is beyond all diſpute. And that Reformed Churches have their *ſet Forms* now, generally, is openly manifeſt, except ſome *Phanatical Schiſmaticks*, that out of a Spirit of *Contradiction*, and *preciſe ſingularity*, by the neglect of theſe things wilfully Unchurch themſelves, and would blot out all appearance of a *Viſible Church* upon the Earth.

Mr. *Calvin*, from the conviction of this Truth, *Epiſt.* 87. approves it, *That ſet Forms of Eccleſiaſtical Rights might be determined; that it might not be lawful for Miniſters in their* Adminiſtrations, *or the People in their* Attendances *to vary from them.* And this he was forced to acknowledge from *Example*, *Practice* and *Reaſon.*

God, who cannot erre, preſcribes *ſet Forms* to the *Jews*, and Chriſt to his Diſciples. And it would be a miſapprehenſion, yea a ſin to think, that They would injoyn or command what might be an hinderance to *Godlineſs*, or a diſadvantage to the Exerciſe thereof.

And the concurrent Judgment and practice of all Churches, muſt convince any ſober perſon of the lawfulneſs and expediency of *ſet Forms*, both in Prayers and Worſhip, which will be furthered by his own Reaſon, if he pleaſe to conſider *Scripture* directions.

2. I ſhall prove *ſet Forms* lawful and expedient from Scripture.

St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 11. pathetically beſeecheth the Church at *Corinth*, by the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that *they would all ſpeak the very ſame thing. Verba ſunt ſymbola mentis; è conſenſu verborum colligimus conſenſum animorum.* Words are but expreſſions of our Intentions, and from agreement in Words we conclude of agreement of Mind. And ſure enough it was not required there by the Apoſtle, that the Speeches of the *Corinthians* in their Religious Aſſemblies, ſhould be of the *ſame ſenſe* and *meaning* only, but of the ſame *expreſſion*; not only *contradiction* of words is prohibited,

but

but *diverſity*, if they would grant his ſuit, whle he beſeecheth them to ſpeak the *ſame thing*.

And well might this be injoyned in Religious Exerciſes; for, *Ubi novæ phraſes, ibi nova dogmata: A quibus Una fides, ab iis requiritur Una Confeſſio.* Where new *phraſes* are uſed, there will be new *opinions:* And in whom there is expected but One Faith, from them there is required but One Confeſſion, ſaith Mr. *Calvin*.

And, when idolizing of the *Gifts* and *Parts* of the Miniſters, cauſed *Contentions* among the *Corinthians*, the Apoſtle might adjudge it neceſſary, that oſtentation of *Eloquence* and *excellency of Speech* ſhould be forborn among them, even in exerciſes of Devotion, and therefore earneſtly beſeecheth them *to ſpeak the ſame thing*.

So, by St. *Pauls* direction, *Timothy* was to hold faſt *the form of ſound words*, at his Church at *Epheſus*; that as there is but *one Faith*, ſo in Believing Congregations there might be but *one Confeſſion*.

And this not only evinced from *Scripture* and *Reaſon* as expedient, but from the Apoſtles practice, who having received the *promiſe* of the Father, and *power* from on high at *Jeruſalem*, they agreed on *one ſummary Rule* for their own Teaching, and the Peoples believing, a compendious ſum of *Evangelical Doctrines*, exquiſitely compoſed, which is delivered to us by Tradition, from Antiquity, and generally received under the Name of the *Apoſtles Creed*.

In which *Confeſſion*, the intelligent Believer not only makes an acknowledgment of his *aſſent* to *Promiſes of Mercy* to be rely'd upon, but to the reaſon-

reasonableness of *Duties of Obedience* that are injoyned by the Gospel to be practiced, and makes open profession of *Communion of Saints*, which must be maintained by the practice of *Holiness*, and comprehend all the duties of Christianity that are required.

And this compendious Confession of Faith by repeating this *set Form*, prescribed by the Apostles, hath been used by the *People* as well as the *Minister*, by which they openly declared their unfeigned *Assent* to what they did believe, and their stedfast *Resolution* of what they would do, in every Congregation that would be reputed of the Church of Christ.

And if it be lawful and expedient to have *set Forms* for Confession of Faith, it cannot be unlawful and unfitting to have *set Forms* for the exercise of Devotion. It cannot be a *reproach* but a *duty* to have our Spirits thus stinted, when the *Spirit of Grace* limits himself in the Rules of *Holiness*, and hath the denomination of *Holy* from this limitation.

And if new sorts of Words, and variety of Expressions must be used in *praying*, as some wildly fancy, I wonder St. *Paul* in all his Epistles, in the beginning should use the same Salutation, and in the end should use the same Valediction; and that Christ in his *Agony*, who wanted neither *expression* or *fervency*, should pray thrice together the same words.

At *Antioch*, that the Christians there in their Congregation, had their *Liturgy*. At *Corinth*, that the People were all *Propheſying*. At *Jeruſalem*, that in their Religi-

Religious Assemblies, they were to *hold fast the profession of their Faith without wavering*; is so evident, as doubtless it can need no further illustration.

And if *set Form* of Words were unlawful in Gods service, certainly the multitude of *Angels* would never have been represented unto us as agreeing in one *Anthem* on Earth, nor they above in the same *doxology* in Heaven.

And if the Examples of *Saints* and *Angels* may lead us rightly; if *Nature*, *God* and *Christ*, and his *Apostles* may direct us safely, we must conclude, That *Uniformity of Words is not only lawful but expedient in the exercise of Godliness.*

3. I shall prove *Uniformity of Words* necessary and expedient by *Reason.*

1. And Reason it self will tell us (if we have not abjured it) that *Uniformity* in *Words* is necessary, and conducing to the practice of *Godliness*; for take this away, and see what giddiness and distractedness must necessarily ensue in every Assembly.

Without agreement in these things, to terminate and bound both our *Thoughts* and *Words*, how improbable is it, that most men should be secured from inconsiderate wandrings, and unwarrantable expressions. But being confined to words of *Faith* and *Devotion*, we call home our *Thoughts* to consider what these import and signifie, that are injoyned and prescribed us, and reverently we *worship* God, and *pray* to him, and *confess* to his Name.

And our wilful Opposers give Testimony to this Truth by their practice, that *set Forms* must be prescribed to the People.

When

When the beſt gifted Brother is appointed and agreed on to put up *Prayers*, which are *ſet Forms* to the whole Congregation; and it is not to be denied, but every Member that is truly *Religious*, ſecretly doth concur with ſuch Prayers, and limit their Thoughts to what is ſignified by ſuch Expreſſions. Weak Creatures! never conſidering that they ſplit upon that Rock which they pretend ſtudiouſly to avoid, while they voluntarily enſlave themſelves, and ſtint their *ſpirits* and *thoughts* to conform to the ſudden wild effuſions, and oft unwarrantable expreſſions of their idolized Teacher; and dare not ſpoil their Liberty, to ſubmit unto, and concur with the deliberate *Forms* and *Preſcriptions* of their ſober Governours and Rulers, which will undoubtedly guide and lead them to the right exerciſe of *true Religion* that tends to peace.

Poor inconſiderate People, they know not what to do; for it is not a *ſet Form* they hate, which they may ſee they cannot avoid, but a *ſpirit of Contradiction* they love, while they oppoſe the warrantable directions of their Religious Leaders, and willingly ſuffer themſelves to be captivated by wild ungovern'd *Enthuſiaſts*, and run headlong into an inexcuſable ſin of a wilful Diſobedience.

But if any can think *ſet Forms* to be unlawful, and will be tied to none, but avoid them, then muſt every pretended Saint bring a diſtinct *Prayer* and *Pſalm*, to be poured out by himſelf in their ſeveral Congregations. And it muſt neceſſarily follow, when every one is ſinging a ſeveral *Pſalm* in their

their Congregation, it muſt happen what St. *Paul* ſaith was at *Corinth*, *when they all ſpake with ſeveral Tongues*, a Stranger coming in muſt in reaſon conclude, that there was *madneſs* in the midſt of them.

Thus in *Reaſon* we muſt determine, to terminate and bound the *Thoughts* and *Conſiderations* of them that would be truly Religious, there ought to be *ſet Forms of Words* agreed upon and preſcribed in Believing Congregations.

2. That is beſt to be uſed that will moſt heighten our *Devotion* and *Intention* in our Religious addreſſes to God; for how ſhall I hope that God ſhould intend me, if I do not intend my own Petitions. And I am verily perſwaded, *Prayer* without *Devotion*, is like a *Body* without a *Soul*, it is dead and ineffectual.

Now this I do deliberately affirm and maintain, *That premeditated and ſet Forms of Prayer muſt heighten any mans Devotion and Intention.*

I deſire ſuch as obſtinately oppoſe *premeditated* and *compoſed Forms*, to conſider, that in this they contend only for *freedom of Words*.

And have *Words* any power or influence over God? Can we imagine, that God is taken with *variety* or *ſhift* of Phraſes? *Words* or *loeutions* are for mans neceſſity, not Gods information. They are of no neceſſity to make our hearts known to him, who underſtand what we need before we ask him, and our Thoughts afar off. And it is the *affections* of our Hearts, not the *expreſſion* of our Mouths, that make us prevail with our God.

What

What therefore may beſt conduce to ſettle our *Conſideration*, to fix our *Deſires* and *Intentions* on God, and good things, is moſt lawful and moſt expedient to be uſed. And this, I dare ſay, upon Reaſon and from Experience, is beſt done by well-weighed Forms of *ſet Prayers*, foreknown and aſſented unto both by Prieſt and People.

For the operation of one Faculty hinders the operation of another; the imployment of the *Underſtanding* and *Invention* muſt hinder the intention of the *Will* and *Devotion*. Sure we muſt acknowledge the buſying of the *Invention* in him that ſpeaketh, and his *Conſideration* in him that heareth, whether things be warrantable or acceptable that is ſpoken, or not, muſt hinder the Intention of either.

And ſince *Intention* is more prayer, and more likely to prevail with God than *Elocution*, I may poſſibly buſie my head and ſtrain my Invention, when I go about to pleaſe men, and if poſſible, quicken my Elocution in preaching. But I will ſettle my heart, and fix my Intention, when I go about to intreat or ſpeak to my God.

In Reaſon therefore, I muſt conclude, and from Experience avouch it, That *Devotions* united in ſame *Expreſſion*, like Waters ſtreightned in one Channel, run the moſt irreſiſtably; yea, undoubtedly, premeditated and fore-known Expreſſions heighten *Intention* and *Devotion*, and make the Prayers of any Congregation the more acceptable, and the more prevalent with God.

The

The Objection is frivolous and weak, which our diſſenting Adverſaries make againſt thoſe *Repetitions* uſed in our *Common Prayer*, as if they did remit and bedead our Affections; when, if rightly conſidered and applyed, they *intend*, *inliven* and *invigorate* them.

Our Saviour at the *laſt Agony* in the *Garden*, three times retired himſelf, and *prayed thrice the ſame words*, Mat. 26. 44. Sure none dare ſay he wanted ability to alter his Expreſſion, or that he wanted *affection*, though he did not. No ſure, we may ſafely conclude to this Point, That, *as Chriſt, ſo the Chriſtian hath his Devotion helped and not hindered, by a ſet and foreknown expreſſion.*

3. The weakneſs of the People is to be conſidered; and I appeal to any ſober man to judge, It being to be granted, that the generality of the People are dull of *Apprehenſion*, of *ſlow Judgment*, prone to *inconſiderateneſs*, and *inadvertency*; whether *ſet Forms*, ſeriouſly fore-weighed, and prudently digeſted and preſcribed, are not more probable Helps of *Devotion*, and better preparations for the Peoples general *Concurrence*, who have neither quick *Apprehenſions* nor diſcerning *Judgments*, than *extempore*, *indigeſted*, and *voluntary effuſions*.

4. The manifold *neceſſities* we are involved in, and *wants* we are ſtreightned with, and the infinite number of *Mercies* wherewith we are bleſſed, and have received, cannot in an inſtant be called to remembrance, and duly be conſidered.

So

So it is not to be ſuppoſed, that our *Petitions* or *Thankſgivings* can be fully or comprehenſively expreſſed upon *extempore effuſion*, but only upon ſerious and deliberate *premeditation*.

Laſtly, It would be good to leave to future times and to other Churches, for their Example, our ſetled *Agreement* and *Conſent*, unanimouſly concurring in the *ſoundneſs* and *incorruptneſs* of our Religion, which we cannot evidence, without we agree in conſtant *Uniformity*, in *Words* and *ſet Forms*, fore-known and agreed unto by *Prieſt* and *People*. But I forbear.

If we will follow the practices of all Nations that pretended to Religion, *true* or *falſe*. If we will be guided by the Rules and Directions of the *Goſpel*. If we will follow the dictates of diſcurſive *Reaſon*; we muſt conclude it *lawful*, *neceſſary*, and *expedient*, and conducing to the practice of *true Piety*, That *Unity of Faith* ſhould be ſignified by *Uniformity of Expreſſion*, in all Believing Congregations.

And as *Unity* of *Faith* was to be ſignified by agreement in the ſame Words, ſo by *Uniformity* in alike Geſtures and Actions, in all the Congregations that were parts of the *Catholick Church* of Chriſt. From thoſe *Prophecies* that fore-tell what there would be, we may conclude what there ſhould and ought to be expected in the Church of the living God.

Chriſt fore-told his *Spouſe* in her Militant ſtate, *Cant. 6. 9*, 10. ſhould be *an Army under Banners*, *ſub vexillo Crucis*, whatever diſtraction of an Army, when ſecure, yet when terrible under Banners, they

They all agree in the ſame poſture, *offenſive* or *defenſive*. In the ſame guard, the ſame march and motion.

And no leſs is intimated, *Cant.* 1. 9. when the *Church* is compared to a *company of Horſes in* Pharaohs *Chariots*; for this reſemblance was not only to intimate of believing Parties, equally joyned together in the ſame deſign, that like *Pharaohs* Horſes there was quickneſs in expedition, but alſo that there was *Uniformity* in that motion. Not that one ſtood up, and another ly'd down; not that one drew forward and another backward; that one pulled this way, another that way. But when *one* ſtood they *all* ſtood, when one ran they all ran; all went the ſame way, all the ſame pace, all uſed the ſame motion. And thus the *Saints* of Believing Congregations might be ſaid to be *like a company of Horſes in* Pharaohs *Chariots*.

And that inlightned Divine, that *ſaw a door opened into Heaven, and a Throne fixed, and one ſitting upon the Throne, and Elders and Angells, ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands, worſhipping him that ſate upon the Throne*, repreſents them to us in their glorious ſtate, as all unanimouſly agreeing, to *fall down, and caſt their Crowns before him that liveth for ever and ever, and all ſaying, Bleſſing, honour, glory and power, &c.* All recorded, without queſtion, to inform us what ought to be our behaviour on Earth, if we would be like them in Heaven, namely, alway to be buſied in a joynt concurrence of acknowledging and worſhipping God, as with the *ſame words*, ſo with the *ſame actions*.

And if any would yet further desire to see this *Uniformity* more expressly urged, by the Apostle, upon particular Churches in the Primitive times, let them observe St. *Paul's* direction to the Church at *Corinth*. To them he could not write unto as *spiritual*, but as *carnal*, and the reason was, because there were *strifes* and *divisions*, and that when they came together in the Church of God, they *eat*, and acted distractedly, and shew'd they were bent more to gratifie the humour of a Party, rather than to preserve the *Unity* of a Society by a well-ordered decency. Shall the Apostle praise them in this? No, such *meetings were for the worse, and not the better*. They were to maintain no such custome in the Church of Christ, in *that* there were to be no *Divisions*, but all things were to be done *decently and in order*.

So to the *Ephesians*, If they would *walk worthy of the Vocation whereunto they were called*, they were to hold *the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*. True indeed, *Unity of spirit* is internal, but *Peace* and its *bond*, their *endeavour* and *walking*, were all external; and it is no more than this, That they would endeavour to hold the *Spirits Unity* by their obliged *Uniformity*.

So *Heb.* 10. After the Divine Author had set out the glorious Priviledges they might expect from *Christ*, he proceeds to direct them a joynt *profession of Faith*, to a demonstration of *love*, to a provocation to *good works*, to mutual exhortations to *Publick meeting*.

And as he to them, so to all the rest of the Churches doth St. *Paul* injoyn, that they should

adorn

adorn their Profession; that their *Conversation* should be *becoming the Gospel*; that they should *behave themselves orderly as in the House of God.*

And now certainly, it may be concluded both from *Scripture* and *Reason*, from the practice of *Saints* in the Church Militant, or Triumphant; That as *internal Unity of Spirit* is to be indeavoured after to present us blameless to God, so should *external Uniformity in words* and *actions*, be endeavoured to be preserved in all believing Congregations.

And now I have plainly and perspicuously discoursed of every Section contained in this Chapter, and I think convincingly to any sober Reason. I may justly complain, that there be too few will believe our Report. *Infœlix infirmitas, ad se vocat medicus ut litibus occupatur ægrotus.*

Peace and *Unity* is praised of many; but very few endeavour to preserve it; And, *Wo is me that I am constrained to dwell in* Mesech, *and have my habitation among the Tents of* Kedar. *My soul hath long dwelt with them that are enemies to Peace.*

And now I speak for peace, I look that some are ready to prepare themselves for battle. I look that that which is the lot of many good Physicians, should be mine at this time, that although my design (God knows) is not to torture my sick Country-men, but to heal them; that some like frantick Patients should run from me, and that others now but touched should cry out of me.

Many, either insensible of their sickness, or else in love with their distemper, are not only careless but backward to be cured. I see and bewail it, that many men are miserably wounded with,

and yet I juſtly lament it, that I find a great unwillingneſs in moſt of them to be Healed.

For *Unity of Faith*, How many men either out of *weakneſs*, or *partiality*, or *prejudice*, or *intereſt*, or *acquaintance*, have eſpouſed raſhly a wilful Opinion, and ſet it up and idolize it. And this fancy, *Opinion*, perhaps *Perſwaſion*, they ſhall cry up and publiſh it abroad for *Conſcience*, *Judgment*, *Faith*. For which, God knows, if examined, they have not the leaſt ſhadow of a Rule, or appearance of Reaſon. So I may complain with St. *Hilary*, *ad Conſtant. Aug. Facta eſt fides, fides temporum potius quam Evangeliorum periculoſum; & miſerabile, tot nunc fides exiſtere, quot voluntates. Excidêrunt ab eâ fide quæ ſola eſt, & dum multæ fiunt, ad id cœperunt eſſe ne ulla ſit.*

I lament that, too apparently to be ſeen in our daies, what the Holy Father complains was to be found in his, *viz. That the* Faith *among us is the Faith of the* Times *rather than the Faith of the* Goſpel. *It is very dangerous and miſerable, that there ſhould be among us as many* Faiths *as* Wills, *and as many* Conſciences *as obſtinate* Reſolutions.

They have departed from that Faith which is *One*, and while they pretend to have many Faiths, they ceaſe to keep any. And if it be rightly conſidered, what *Faith* or *Conſcience* is, there is ſcarce any true knowledge, or practice, of either to be found in too great a part of our Generation.

I hear the words frequently among us, but I muſt publiſh it, that I do not underſtand them; *May I not have liberty of Conſcience? May I not differ in Judgment from other men, and yet agree in*

in Affection? May we not go ſeveral waies, and yet meet together at the end of our Journey?

Were ever any ſuch things reaſonably vented in a Conſtituted Church? Have not the men loſt both *Reaſon* and *Religion* that dare confidently publiſh theſe things? Can there be ſuch a thing as *Liberty of Conſcience?* Are they not abſolutely inconſiſtent? Conſider, and it muſt be acknowledged, If thou haſt *Conſcience* of any thing thou haſt no Liberty; if thou haſt *Liberty* there can be no Conſcience.

May not men differ in *Judgment* and yet agree in *Affection?* What, *ad idem*, in reſpect to the ſame thing? certainly, No; it is impoſſible. If I judge a thing *lawful* and thou judgeſt the ſame thing *unlawful*, our Affections muſt differ as much as *love* and *hate*, and certainly theſe are contrary Affections.

Can we not go ſeveral waies, and yet meet at the end of our Journey? certainly, No. The end of our Journey we both tend to is agreed on to be *Heaven*, *Happineſs*. Now if *Vertue* be the right way to Happineſs, and that lies in a ſtrait line, as *Morality* teaches us, ſure there can be no declining this Line but there muſt be *obliquity*. If the Way to Heaven be *narrow* and *ſtreight on*, as *Divinity* teaches us, thoucanſt not go beſides this Way but thou wilt at laſt fall headlong into the Ditch. We muſt both of us keep the ſame *way*, or elſe one of us muſt be in the *broad way that leads to deſtruction*.

And for *Unity of Affection*, where can we find that in a Family, much leſs in a Pariſh or Congre-

gation? If ever the Complaint was true it is now in our daies, that *Fratrum concordia rara eſt.* We are all pretending to travel with the ſame deſign from *Egypt* to our Father in *Canaan*, and we are Brethren, but how few of us look to the Charge given us? How few are they that take heed that they do not *fall out in the way.*

There be two Graces that Chriſt commends to us as the *way* to the kingdom of Heaven, *Humility* and *Charity*, but inſtead of theſe we ſee the contrary, *Pride* and *Contention.* All pretended Members of Chriſts body, yet no ſympathy, no *bearing one anothers burthen.* We are ready to laugh at each others *infirmity*, and to rejoyce at each others *miſery.* Our *iniquity* aboundeth, and *love* waxeth cold. Our diſtinguiſhing Garment is rent clean in pieces, which ſhould be our *Charity*, and that is the *bond of perfectneſs.* This mans hope is that mans fear. One mans joy is another mans ſorrow.

And as we can hardly find *Unity in Judgment*, or *Affections*, ſo rare it is to ſee *Uniformity in Words* or *Actions.* For words inſtead of agreement, what difference, what oppoſition? And for thoſe that ſeparate from the Communion of the viſible Church of *England*, where can we find that Congregation that agrees to ſpeak the ſame thing.

We dwell among People of a ſtrange Language. The *Trumpets* have given, from moſt Pulpits, an *uncertain ſound*, and how can the Souldiers agree to prepare themſelves to the Battle.

We

We may observe, many of our Priests have been lingring to offer *strange Fires*, such wild expressions and inconsiderate excursions, as instead of helping have diverted our Devotions and distracted our Affections.

And for *Actions* instead of *decency* and *order*, what distraction, yea, what confusion in all our separated Congregations. By appearance one would judge them of *Babel* rather than of *Jerusalem*. Such distractions, as if every one had a peculiar God by himself; or rather, such universal *profaneneß* or *irreverence*, as if no God were thought of as present throughout their whole Congregations. Our Neighbours and Acquaintance stand aloof off from that *Uniform* worship of God that is prescribed and injoyned, and no wonder if Strangers think and report, that some dreadful Disease cleaves fast unto us.

I heartily lament many *Crying sins* that are generally spreading over the body of this poor Nation, and yet, upon sober Consideration, I cannot judge any sin so manifestly destructive to the health and beauty of the believing Society, and Church of *England*, as is this of *Schisme* and *Separation*.

There is no one sin that tyrannizeth more over us, but we may say to *Schism*, as the Pirate did once say to *Alexander*, *Thou blamest and condemnest me for preying on single Persons, and accountest thy self without fault, while thou destroyest a whole Nation.*

These things have I written and spoken to my dissenting Country-men, not in wrath and bitter-

neſs to ſhame and torment them, but with grief and compaſſion to warn and amend them, that we may all agree to baniſh thoſe *Schiſms* and *Diviſions* in the Service of God, which are this day our ſhame, and that we may endeavour to bring back that *Unity* in Gods worſhip, which was once the glory and joy of this poor Church and Nation.

My endeavour, as well as my Prayers, ſhall alwaies be, *that we agree to hold the Unity of the ſpirit in the bond of Peace.* For *Zions* ſake I cannot hold my peace, nor for *Hieruſalems* ſake be quiet, till I have manifeſted my ſtudy and endeavour to bring all the baptized Subjects of this Church and Kingdom, to ſignifie the *Unity of their Faith by an open Uniformity.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Canons and Forms eſtabliſhed and preſcribed by our Governours, to direct and promote the General Uniformity of Engliſh *Profeſſours, are moſt agreeable to the Rules of the Goſpel, and are the beſt and moſt convenient that are viſibly extant to us in the World.*

Section,

I. *There muſt be Forms or Canons preſcribed, by Rulers, to carry on Uniformity.*

II. *The Canons and Forms already eſtabliſhed to this end, in* England, *are agreeable to the Rules of the Goſpel.*

III. *Theſe Canons and Forms are viſibly the beſt, extant to us, upon ſober Conſideration.*

SECT.

SECT. I.

There must be Forms or Canons prescribed by Rules, to carry on Uniformity.

GOD, who by his wise Providence governs all the works of his hands, rules them all by a *Law*. And Governours subordinate, as appointed and sent by him, are to govern Rational men, joyned in Society under them, by a *Law* also.

As God in the World, so Christ in his Church, complying with the *Necessities* and *Infirmities* of his Subjects, hath given *Rules* to direct them in *Faith*, *Devotion* and *Conversation*, by that New Law, which is the *Gospel*, by which superintendent Frame of Government, his subordinate Governours are to govern his *Church* to the end of the World.

And so according to that *New Law*, Christs Deputies are to establish Laws of *Piety* and Laws of *Honesty*.

We are now in this part of our Treatise to speak of those Laws that respect *Piety*; and according to the two parts whereof Man consists, some Injunctions of *Piety* must concern our Souls, and some our Bodies.

The Injunctions of Governours that direct to purity of hearts and spirits, may be called *Counsels*, *Monitions*. They cannot properly be called the

the Laws of *Governours*, but Laws of *Christ*; for they cannot oblige the *Souls* of the Subjects either by *rewards* or *punishments*, having no cognizance when they obey, or when they rebel, when they heartily like or dislike such Injunctions. *Christ* can only reward these according to their hidden works.

But *Rules* of sensible things, for ordering mens *words* or *actions*, those are properly called the Laws of *Governours*; for of these they can make discovery. The *observance* or *omission* of these things are discernable by Rulers, and according to the Merits of their Subjects so they can recompence them.

And let no sober Person think, that *Laws* about external demeanour, or decent behaviour of our Bodies in our Religious attendances, are such trifles, toyes, needless Circumstances, childish, insignificant Ceremonies, as many irrationally and inconsiderately defame them, when they are natural and necessary for our *Communion* in our present condition; when true Grace *operates*, the light within us *directs*, and the Holy Spirit *delights* in these things, being willing to admit of our *Bodies* to be his Temple; when these *Vessels* are to be possessed in *sanctification* and *honour*. And God hath called us not to *uncleanness*, but *holiness* of these things.

When Christ, by his *Gospel*, hath ordered the hearing and preaching of his *Word*, the administration and receiving the *Sacraments*, the regarding our *Conversations* and *Words*, by which we are either justified or condemned. And these things are sensible and external. And

And certainly, an imputation of *Rashness* and *Uncharitableness* cannot be deserved by us, if from such open and wilful opposition and slighting of *Externals*, as unnecessary and inexpedient, we should judge these men as wilfully bent to overthrow Humane Government, when they would destroy that in a moment, about which alone Government can be busied and employed.

It must then be granted, That the publick exercise of *Universal Piety*, ought to be the Governours first care, and that their first *Laws* ought to be about injoyning *Uniformity* to their Subjects.

Now by *Uniformity*, as it hath been set forth in the preceding Chapter, is meant *an Unity or joynt assent and concurrence of Professors both in Words and Actions*, *Confessions* and *Gestures*, fitly expressing and signifying a Religious *respect* and *reverence* to that Supream Majesty we meet to adore. A service so useful and necessary, that all Governours by their Laws have injoyned it; and all Nations by their practice have attested it in all Religious Meetings through all Generations.

1. Because GOD, who is not a God of *Confusion* but of *Order*, a God not of *Division* but of *Unity*, is best pleased and most glorified when no man draws back, but when without distraction there is an Universal discovery of every mans evident respect to him. *When the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of* Israel, *to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.*

2. Thus *Neighbours* are most edified. Consent and agreement of others with us, give a pleasure

and

and content to us. It gives a confirmation to our *Judgment* and *practice* when we receive approbation and allowance from the practice of others.

3. Thus *Infidels* are moſt likely to be wrought upon and converted. One mans preaching may make a man conſider, but certainly it cannot have ſo great an Influence as the *Uniformity* of a whole believing Congregation. We are ready to think thoſe things not hurtful but beneficial, which we ſee *univerſally* practiſed; and we are eaſily drawn to the practice of thoſe things which we ſee generally allowed and uſed by others.

So that, if a man be converted or unconverted, *joynt Concurrence* in Common Service, and the *Uniform* Worſhip of God, is more to be valued than any one mans Preaching, being of a greater influence and of a ſtronger operation.

Since therefore we ſpeak of a viſible Church, be it *Catholick*, *National*, or *Parochial*, it is *Cœtus evocatorum*, a Company of Men called, not *inviſibly*, *internally*, but *externally*, *ſenſibly*, and ſuch as have manifeſted their complyance with that Call. Not a Company but a Society of Believers joyned together by a mutual profeſſion of Faith.

For as *Unity* of a ſincere Faith is neceſſary for the Conſtitution of the Church *inviſible*, ſo is *Unity* of profeſſion of Faith neceſſary for the Conſtitution and being of a *viſible* Church. And to avoid raſh unanſwerable *expreſſions*, and unbecoming *behaviour*, it is both reaſonable and neceſſary that *words* and *actions* ſhould be reaſonably agreed upon and determined.

The

The *thoughts* of our Souls, like the *eyes* of our Bodies, without an Object to terminate them, will wander to the ends of the Earth; therefore the prime work of *Piety* and *Religion*, in the Rational Soul, is to set God before the eyes of its Understanding. That, upon serious consideration, seeing and concluding him the *Best* and the *Greatest*, man may rationally both think and speak most honourably of him, and behave himself most reverently towards him.

For *Uniformity* then in Religious exercises, of necessity there must be the same Object; GOD, who is infinite, must be proposed. That our *considerations* and *respects* may be terminated upon him. And of necessity there must be *Rules* and *Forms* agreed upon and fixed, to direct and limit all associated Professors, that their *considerations* and *respects* may be united either in knowing God or worshipping him.

Circumstances cannot be left indefinite and undetermined; for mans *Thoughts* are as diverse, naturally, as their Faces and Tempers. Their *Words* and *Actions* usually wild and extravagant, and not only different but contrary also; unless all these be bounded and terminated, what *Unity* can there be? An arbitrary Will-worship will follow, according to every mans fancy; and in every meeting instead of a well-ordered Unity, there must necessarily happen *distraction* and *confusion*.

And these things are obvious to every man that rationally considers them; for never any Nation that had *Religion* true or false, but alwaies agreed on a Common Ministration. And in all their

Sacri-

Sacrifices, either *propitiatory* or *gratulatory*, they have united together by certain *Rules* in a common Service, and a joynt concurrence in it, to that Deity which they adored.

And certainly, all those Reasons formerly alleadged to urge an open *profession of Faith*, return with new vigour, strictly to oblige every Visible Church, to acknowledge the necessity of fixing and observing *Rules of Uniformity* in every respective Congregation. That the infinite Majesty of GOD may be generally and worthily glorified: That our *Neighbours* and our selves, may be most probably edified and comforted: That those that are *Unbelievers* may have their Conversion best furthered; there must be *Canons* and *Forms* prescribed by Rulers to carry on a general Uniformity.

To conclude this Section then, Governours must Rule by a *Law*; their Laws can reach only to *Externals* in the exercise of Godliness. In which *Exercise* of Godliness, the first aim of Governours by their Laws, is to promote *Uniformity* in Religious Assemblies. To settle and continue an *Uniformity* there must be *Rules* to limit and direct.

SECT.

SECT. II.

That the Canons and Forms in our Liturgy, preſcribed to the ends above-mentioned, are moſt agreeable to the Rules of the Goſpel, is the next conſiderable.

LITURGY in its etymologie, if rightly underſtood, gives its full import and ſignification. It is a *Form* or *Rule* of Adminiſtration in ſome publick Office.

Sometimes it is put in Scripture for Miniſtration in offices of *Humanity* and *Liberality*. But our diſcourſe and common Acceptation leads us, to take it for that kind of *Miniſtration* that relates to *Holy things* about the Service and worſhip of God. So here we underſtand it to be, *the Canons and Forms preſcribed in a Viſible Church, of external profeſſion of Faith, by an evident demonſtration of Obedience.* For, λεῖτον ἔργον λαῦ ἰτὸν, *quod fit per populum, & fit publicum*, a publick, Religious Miniſtration in a Congregation of Believers. So the People muſt be underſtood concerned in the *Miniſtration* as well as the Prieſt. And thoſe of the People that would be accounted of the Viſible Church, are to ſubmit and conform to ſuch *Canons* and *Forms* as are preſcribed in the Miniſtration.

And when a Church is not an Aſſembly only, but a Society of the *Faithful*; not *internally* Faithful

ful only (for that is not discernible by us) but *externally* by publick Profession, either by *words* or *actions*.

What our Judgments must be of them, that in Assemblies neglect and despise *Profession*, according to Rules prescribed, is easily to be concluded: For whatever good opinion others blindly may have of such, or they may have of themselves, yet, not giving in their Assemblies any evident signs of *external Profession*, they are in reason not to be judged of the Visible Church of Christ.

And this shews, how unjustifiable the *Meetings* of our Separatists are, when there is no *publick exercise of Religion*, no *vocal confession of Faith*, no *expreſs desires of Obedience*, in any of their Congregations.

To give evidence of any Assembly, that it is a part of the Visible Church, there must be a sensible *Profession*, an apparent submission to the *Canons* and *Forms* of a Liturgy. And conformity of the People to those *Rules*, gives satisfaction who are to be reputed; but wilful omission and neglect declares who are not to be reputed of the *Church* of Christ. And blessed be God, we have, as it is necessary and expedient, from our wise Governours, considering our infirmities and extravagancies, *Canons* and *Forms* prescribed in our Liturgy for Religious Ministration, which are most agreeable to the Rules of the *Gospel*.

The *Rules* of the Gospel, given by Christ and his Apostles, are of so different natures, such different sorts: The *Canons* and *Forms* ordering our Common-Service, in the publick exercise of Reli-

gion, are so numerous and various, as it were the work of an Age to discourse distinctly and pertinently of every particular, that may be comprehended in this Section. But first let us consider what we understand by the *Rules* of the Gospel, to which our *Canons* and *Prayers* are to conform.

Now our Blessed Saviour, at the first planting of the *Gospel* (upon the Apostles and Seventy, before his Passion, and upon some Chosen Vessels for his Honour, after his Ascension having all power given him) did in those daies plentifully pour out his *Spirit* upon them, and *gifts*, *graces* and *ability* he gave to them in an extraordinary manner and measure, for the work of the Ministery and edifying his Body, by the prevalence of his *Word* and *Gospel*, which he sent them abroad to preach, confirming the Word by signs following.

That the whole power of the World was not able to resist the wisdom and Spirit by which they spake, divers Gifts he distributed of miraculous operation. For different Administrations; as *Gifts of Healing*, *working of Miracles*, *Propheſying*, *discerning of Spirits*, *diverse kinds of Tongues*, *Interpretation of Tongues*. All these in an instant wrought that one and self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he pleased.

And several *Rules* he gave them, that trusting to the supply of the Almighty in all their exigence, upon this Heavenly design, they should *provide neither Gold nor Silver*, *nor Scrip*, *nor Coat*, *nor Shooes*, *nor Staves*. No care what to speak, *dabitur in illâ horâ*; whatever they needed, the Heavenly Father

that

that called them to the work, would ſupply them in all thoſe things.

But theſe Rules were *extraordinary*, and ſo were the *Aſſiſtances* needful only for thoſe Perſons, in thoſe daies of *Perſecution* when they were *hated of all men for his Names ſake*, and were to truſt only to a ſupport and a ſupply from the *All-ſufficiency* of the Almighty.

But, bleſſed be God, we are not now incompaſſed with theſe *ſtreights*, God hath provided better things for us. That although the malice of ſome men would bring us to walk according to theſe *Rules*, and ſupport our ſelves with the expectation of ſuch *Aſſiſtances*, and thoſe miſtakes have cauſed no little diſturbance in the Church of Chriſt; yet, now the *Goſpel* hath found a free paſſage and reception, we have an happier juncture of Affairs.

We need not expect *Miracles* for our ſupport, when we have *Means* in peace afforded us to carry on the deſign of God. *God* is, and *we* may well be contented with more reaſonable Services. And it is unreaſonable to think, having none of the ſame neceſſity upon us, and to conclude, that in *theſe* daies the ſame *Gifts* and *Aſſiſtances* ſhould be continued among us, is a dangerous and an unſufferable preſumption.

Theſe extraordinary *Rules* and *Aſſiſtances* were given to thoſe particular Perſons, during thoſe particular Times; but they are now unpracticable, and not according to the mind of Chriſt. And there were ſome *Rules* given to certain Churches, and ſome particular places, but theſe are not our

Canons or *Forms* to be modelled by. The *Rules* then of the Gospel we are to look after, are not *particular* but *universal*, not *temporary* but *eternal*, binding for ever to the whole Church of Christ.

Now, the *Laws* of the Gospel given by Christ, or his Apostles, are of two sorts; some respect *internally*, the regulating *Intentions*, *Thoughts* and *Desires*, for private Persons, singular peace: And some respect *externally*, ordering the *Conversation* of the Visible Church of Christ. To the *Rules* of this latter sort we must have regard unto, in this present discourse.

And these *Rules* are of two sorts; either *natural*, *necessary*, *eternal* and *indispensable*, and would have been binding if Christ had not revived them; As, that *we praise God*, *fall down and worship him*; that *we keep our Tongues from evil*, *and our Lips that they speak no guile*; that *we keep our Bodies from all filthiness*; that *whatever we would that others should do to us*, *the same*, *&c.*

But some *Laws* are *positive* and *voluntary*, receiving their being and constitution from Christ, whose *goodness*, *wisdom* and *Authority*, we are not to suspect, but that he will direct those things to his Church that are best and most convenient, and such *Directions*, by his Subjects, are carefully to be observed; As, that *they should pray in these words*; *receive the Sacraments with those signs and manner of Communication required.*

All these positive Laws of Christ are *universal*, *indispensable*, and though the positive Laws of Men are *particular* and *mutable* upon inconvenience,

ence, yet these *positive Laws* of Christ are constituted, and come from such unquestionable Wisdom, as they must be accounted *universally* and *eternally* binding to his Church, to all Generations.

The *Laws* then of Christ, be they either those *natural Laws* that he revived, or the *positive Laws* that he constituted, that he hath *ordinarily*, *universally*, *eternally*, left his Church to be ruled by to the end of the World, are the Laws we would have our *Canons*, for Uniformity, to be tryed by.

And because our Blessed Saviour knew very well, that an *Anarchy* was unnatural, and not to be endured, he wisely directs these Laws to two sorts of People that will be in his Church to the end of the World.

First, To *Rulers*, *Leaders* and *Superiours*.

Secondly, To *Inferiours*, *Subjects* and the *Generality* of the People under Authority.

1. For *Rulers*, They be of two sorts; some *Civil*, which we call *Magistrates*: Others *Ecclesiastical*, which we call *Ministers*.

What concerns *Magistrates* we treated of formerly.

For *Ministers* we have several Orders, and distinctions, allowed by the Gospel. The *Laws* for them are obvious, in the discharge of their several Offices.

Inferiour Ministers most concern us in the Exercise of Religion. These, if any, we should in this discourse respect. And certainly, that Obedience which these Ministers shew in their usages, as

directed in their *Rites*, *Ceremonies*, *Habits*, *Geſtures*, *obſerving daies*, *&c.* are lawful and eaſily juſtifiable.

And theſe things are made ſo clear by the pens of ſober, Learned and Judicious men, to any that will not be wilfully blind, all the Objections ſo fully anſwered, as it would be tedious and impertinent for me to inſiſt in a further Vindication.

It were more reaſonable and Chriſtianlike if men would look more diligently to the diſcharge of their own duties, and be leſs ready to cenſure and condemn other mens Juſt obſervances. If any thing were queſtionable in them, *viderint ipſi*, they muſt anſwer it to their proper Judge, who made thee one?

Be not curiouſly inquiſitive what others do, or ſhould do, *Tolle quod tuum eſt*, do thy own buſineſs, and ſeriouſly conſider what thou art bound to do thy ſelf, that thou maiſt inherit *eternal life*. And this I am ſure thou art obliged to do; *to give thy Decent attendance, and joynly to concur in the Publick exerciſe of Holineſs, and the worſhip of God, as it is ordered in the Book of Common-Prayer.*

And now our diſcourſe begins to be brought into a narrow compaſs. This is all that remains for us to prove in this Section, That the *Canons* and *Forms* preſcribed to the Common ſort of our Believers, in our Book of *Common-Prayer*, are agreeable to the univerſal, eternal, and indiſpenſable *Rules* of the Goſpel.

Canons

Canons for Uniformity, in our Religious meetings and Aſſemblies which we are not to forſake, reſpect either *Words* or *Actions*, let us take a quick ſurvey of either, and ſee if both be not allowed and preſcribed by the *Goſpel*.

After a Company is Religiouſly met and aſſembled together, all admit and approve of a *Paſtour* or *Teacher*, an Exhorter, a Leader to holy Services, unleſs they have loſt their Reaſon and Religion alſo.

After their Aſſembling, the Miniſter, by *Scripture Exhortations*, prepares the People for their joynt concurrence in the ſolemn Worſhip of God.

After Preparation, the whole Congregation is ordered and directed to joyn in an *open Confeſſion*, of *Gods* Excellency and All-ſufficiency, of their *own* Sins, of *Chriſts* Merits, in whoſe Name they ask *forgiveneſs*, and of their deſire of a *full Obedience*, that they may live a godly, righteous and ſober life.

After this, upon good grounds, is denounced *Abſolution of ſins*, upon the intimation of their unanimous deſires to leave and forſake them.

Then all the People joyn in the *Lords Prayer*, Confeſſion of Praiſe and Thanks to the glory of the *Trinity*, into whoſe Name they were all Baptized.

Then they proceed to *Hymns* and *Pſalms*, to mutual Exhortations, and ſtirring up each in other holy Affections.

Then follows *vocal Confeſſion of Faith*; a *Litany* they all joyn in, deprecating all *evil*, praying for all *good*, for themſelves and all men.

Then they proceed to give intimation of their mutual desires and resolutions, of a full obedience and respect to all Gods *Commandements*.

And as in *Service* so in *Sacraments*, the People give a clear acknowledgment of their adhering to the true and undefiled *Religion*, to which they have ingaged themselves. Of their consideration and estimation of *God*; of their meet and suitable *Affections*.

And if the People be silent for a while, while the Priest is offering up a sacrifice of *Prayer* and *Praise* in Christs Name, on the behalf of the Congregation; yet, that every man may testifie his intention, and consideration, and particular assent, when universally, as directed and ordered, they speak *Amen*, which is then best done when most heartily exprest, that our *Amen* in our meetings might be like thunder, and our *Hallelujahs* like the noise of many waters.

For *Actions*, they are not many injoyned to the People; As, their meeting at convenient *time* and *place*. Their *kneeling* and *prostration* upon acknowledgment of Gods Excellencies, and begging Mercy. Their *standing* at any Exultation or rejoycing at a sense of Mercy promised or exhibited. Receiving the *Sacrament* with significant intimations of becoming *Consideration*s and *Affections*.

These *Canons* and *Forms* prescribed for the Peoples *Uniformity*, which are in our *Liturgies*, are allowed and justified by the practice of the *Primitive times*, by dictates of *Human Reason*, or else by expres *Rules* of the Gospel.

SECT.

SECT. III.

These Canons and Forms, in our Liturgies, are the best that are visibly now extant to us, upon sober Consideration.

AND, how shall we be able to maintain these the Best, which some will not grant to be good at all?

The Herd of *Sectaries* are all of them nibbling at our *Liturgy*. Their work is to *defame*, and if they can, to *destroy*; yet of all things, they most virulently aim at the Publick *Service* of the Church.

We remember with grief enough what late storm brought these Locusts; but yet we may complain, no contrary wind hath driven them quite away, there are yet too many in our Coasts.

We hear them still maliciously and unreasonably Object:

1. *That our* Liturgy *is taken out of the* Romish Missal; *the greater part of it is Popish Trumpery; the Papists use it, &c.*

Malice, whose end is alwaies to wound and do mischief, never boggles to compass it by the most unlawful means. What she can never hope to bring about by publishing *truths*, she is ready to attempt by raising *slanders* and *false suggestions*. For certainly none that are not wilfully ignorant, but must acknowledge, that most of our *Prayers, Confessions*,

and

and *Responses*, used in our Divine Service, are taken either out of the *Holy Scriptures*, or out of the *Liturgies* of the Primitive and purest Ages, before ever the Court of *Rome* had exalted it self, or proudly had usurped the Supremacy and Headship above the Church of Christ.

But suppose it be granted, what we cannot deny, That many things are used in our *Liturgy* by us, which are to be found in the *Romish Missal* or *Brevlary*, the question is, whether the things be good and lawful of themselves or not? Doubtless, we are not to forbear things that are good and lawful, because *bad men* make use of them; then we must not use either *meat*, or *drink*, or *cloth*, or *Sun*; we must necessarily go quite out of the World.

I shall thankfully partake of the *meat* that is wholsome, although *wicked* and *unclean men* sometimes eat of it. I shall willingly embrace any *holy Truth*, though confessed by the *Father of Lies*.

I see *light* and *darkness* may be in the same Subject, *health* and *sickness* in the same Body, *good* and *evil* are in the same Persons.

I shall pluck a *wholsome Herb*, and make use of it, though I find it in a dirty Ditch: I'le throw away a *poysonous Weed*, though in a Garden.

And, if I can discern, I shall decline what is *bad*, though I see it in the most Vertuous; and follow what is *good*, though in the most Licentious.

If *Evil men* give good gifts to their Children; If *Jews* or *Papists* offer to God a sacrifice of Praise, and

and uſe ſuch *words* or *actions* as may beſt promote the right exerciſe of true Religion; I ſhall think it my duty, in all things that are *good* and *lawful*, to follow them.

Object. 2. *In our Liturgy are* (they ſay) *vain Repetitions, dead Sacrifices, empty Forms; void of that life and affection which is neceſſary for Gods ſervice.*

And now, who does not ſee the *weakneſs* and *malice* of our Oppoſers in this Accuſation, charging the fault upon the *Forms*, which is properly laid upon them that inconſiderately make uſe of them. For the vanity is in the *Perſons* that are careleſs, not in the *Repetitions*, if rightly attended. For, if thou beeſt well diſpoſed, *Repetitions* will awaken thy *Conſideration*, and not becalm or bedead, but quicken and heighten *Devotion*.

Deadneſs of Affection is a fault, but certainly the *Forms* or *Repetitions* are not guilty of it; the fault is in thy *heedleſneſs*.

'Tis not juſt to impute that fault to the *Offering*, that is in *thy ſelf* that art to tender it.

Thou who wilfully oppoſeſt thy *ſelf*, reſtrain thy wild, wandring *Thoughts*, ſummon thy *Intention*, baniſh thy *Dulneſs*, quicken thy *Devotion*, never doubt it, all will ſucceed well in uſing theſe *Forms*; I dare ingage, both thou and thy ſacrifice will be accepted.

Object. 3. *They are offended at the length of the Prayers. For uſing all the Forms as they are preſcribed in our* Liturgy, *takes up* (ſay they) *too much Time, that the Gifted man hath not his full liberty of exerciſing himſelf in preaching, with which the godly*

godly People are moſt delighted. Common-Prayer would be omitted, or ſhortned, that Sermon may not be hindred. This they take for granted, that *Preaching* is to be preferred before *Praying*.

Anſw. The Allegation is falſe and ridiculous in every particular. For, the *Forms* preſcribed are not too long, nor ſo long as they neceſſarily hinder *Preaching*; both may very conveniently be done.

But, what if the *Gifted man* were hindred from offering his ſtrange Fire, his wild effuſion in *Praying* or *Preaching*; Certainly if this were in the compaſs of the length of our *Common-prayers* to be prevented, it would prove not their fault but their commendation.

What unhappy Conſequences have happened from Miniſters oſtentation of *Eloquence*, *Parts* and *Gifts*, its notoriouſly evident among us. While the People having their idolized Teachers *Perſons* in Admiration, they have divided into Factions and Parties, and have diſturbed the *peace* and *Unity* of the moſt flouriſhing Church of the World.

And if it be ſeriouſly conſidered, what unſound *Doctrines*, what diſtracting *Notions*, what pernicious *Opinions*, what erronious and *Dividing Principles*, have been publiſhed and entertained of late years in the midſt of us?

It cannot be unreaſonably concluded, That there ſhould be limits and boundaries ſet, in this preſent juncture of Affairs, to reſtrain the wildneſs of ſome mens *Preaching* as well as *Praying*, certainly would much conduce to the ſetling of *Order* and

Peace

Peace both in Church and Nation.

But, if as *Common-prayer* is wiſely injoyned, ſo *Preaching* muſt be freely tolerated, let it be ſoberly conſidered, which of the two, if we cannot do both, is moſt conveniently omitted, either *Prayers* or *Sermon*.

Our *Prayers* are deliberately compoſed, in *Preaching* there is too oft ſudden and unjuſtifiable effuſions.

Prayers directly and immediately tend to Gods Honour; *Preaching* oft doth not, but to the diſtracting of the People.

In *Prayers* God is ſerved and worſhipped; by *Preaching* mens humors are gratified and fancies pleaſed.

In *Sermons* at beſt, we do but hear what we ſhould do; in *Prayers*, we do what we hear is fit to be done. *Sermons* edifie our knowledge, *Prayers* our practice.

In ſhort, As much as *doing* is to be preferred before *hearing*, *Practice* before *Notion*, the certain knowledge of God before the uncertain knowledge and the humouring our ſelves; ſo much without doubt ought our attendance upon *Praying* to be preferred, before running after *Preaching*.

But ſince it would be little conducing to my own content, or the Chriſtian Readers delight, or the wilful Oppoſers credit, to rake into that puddle of *Reproach*, that from unreaſonable *prejudice* they have, falſly and maliciouſly, vomited up againſt our beſt compoſed *Liturgy*; I forbear advisedly, and declare my Judgment freely under my hand, in the Reverend Dr. *Hammonds* words, *Ever ſince the*

Reproaches

Reproaches of men have taken confidence to vent themſelves againſt our Liturgy, *there hath been nothing but* air *and* vapour *vomited out againſt it.* Objections, *of little force to conclude any thing, but reſolute, contumacious* ignorance *or* malice *of the Objectors.*

For when we conſider, how full our *Liturgy* is of Canons and Forms directing every Believer in true Religion, to the acknowledging and worſhipping of God: That all the *Promiſes* are confeſſed to be relied upon, as the ground of our Confidence. That all the *Rules* are repeated that are directive to a Goſpel Obedience, and that we ſignifie our Deſires and Reſolutions to obſerve and conform to them. When all the *Evils* we fear are deprecated, and all the neceſſary *Bleſſings* we can deſire are petitioned for.

And when I conſider that *comely Order*, and *decent Uniformity*, of the whole Society that ſubmit to our Churches pure Directions, that upon diligent ſearch, I cannot perceive any of the *Popiſh* paint of *ſuperſtitious, needleſs Ceremonies*, that may cauſe a ſuſpicion of diſhoneſt Intentions. Nor contrariwiſe, the leaſt *careleſs, forlorn Irreverence*, that may bring a diſeſteem and contempt upon our Exerciſes, as is ſeen in the Meetings of our *Schiſmaticks*, whoſe open Prophaneneſs extract not only a *ſuſpicion*, but a juſt cenſure of the Meeters *Atheiſme* and *Infidelity.*

I muſt conclude with that Bleſſed Martyr, Father to our Gracious Soveraign upon the Throne, upon ſearch and diſpute, *That our Liturgy of* England *is abſolutely the Beſt, that is viſibly extant to us in the World.*

If

If it were possible, it can be neither pleasure to my self, nor profit to others, to take a survey of all the *Liturgies* that have been and are in the World; to understand, compare, weigh, and judge distinctly of every of them; to set out the redundancies of some, and the defect of others; to pass sentence, and give preference to what is most absolute. This is more than ever any man did fully, or can do, in that short time of his Pilgrimage that is measured out unto him.

This cannot be expected, nor is it necessary; for when our discourse is directed to our Fellow-Subjects of *England*, who are generally Christians of an ordinary Capacity; to cast an eye upon those *Liturgies* that may fall under their general Cognizance, may in this case suffice us.

A mans Choice cannot extend beyond the dimensions of his knowledge. We neither chuse nor refuse any one thing before another, but we understand and discern either a surpassing goodness or inconvenience in it. And it is as natural for discursive Creatures to chuse what is best, as to desire what is good.

And for Believing Societies to have *Canons* and *Forms*, for the People to abide by, is not only expedient but necessary; and this, I dare say, hath been proved sufficiently.

Sith then, we of this Church of *England*, as is pretended, have a *Liturgy* prescribed, in which Dissenters themselves can alleadge nothing absolutely unlawful; frowardly to lay this quite aside, or to change it for another, which is less useful and unwarrantable, is unreasonable and unnatural.

For

For the generality of my Fellow-Subjects to linger after the *Romiſh Maſs* is not to be defended, nor excuſed: For in *Prayers*, or *Praiſes*, or *Confeſſions*, how ſhall he that is unlearned concur, ſeeing he doth not clearly underſtand what is ſaid.

And the ſame may be ſaid in this caſe in regard of all other *Liturgies* uſed among us; There can be no deſire of them, of which moſt of the Commonalty have little (if any) underſtanding.

Beſides, in the *Romiſh Miſſal* or *Breviary*, how many things of *Faith* and *Manners* are preſcribed; how many *Confeſſions* and *Prayers* injoyned, which neither by Scripture or Reaſon can be defended or juſtified; and this by our Learned Pens have been cleared to the World ſufficiently.

But for our *Liturgies*, I dare challenge the moſt profeſſed Enemy, the moſt wilful Recuſant, to inſtance, if he can, in any immodeſt or light action that is injoyned in any unmeet Expreſſion that is preſcribed.

Let them ſay what is *ſuperfluous* or *redundant*, that can be reſcinded: What is *defective* and *imperfect*, and what ought to be ſupplied and compleated.

So that upon exact ſcrutiny, I muſt moderately and truly give in this Return, *That the* Canons *and* Forms *in our* Liturgy *are ſo ordered, that they plainly direct the whole Congregations to moſt clear ſignifications of their Religious Intentions.*

Our *Preparations* at our firſt Aſſembling, are ſuch, as muſt beget in us a holy Reverence and godly fear.

Our

Our *Confeſſion of ſins*, ſuch as are declarative of our unfeigned ſorrow and humility.

Our asking *Pardon*, ſo ordered as we expreſs our Confidence.

Our *Suffrages* ſhort, but indicative of true Piety and Devotion.

Our *Articles of Faith* to be confeſſed, are compendiouſly compoſed, but fully and comprehenſively.

Our *Hymns* uſed, and *Doxologies*, ſo Heavenly, as may well become a quire of Angels.

All our *Common Service*, ſo reaſonably, ſo piouſly ordered and diſpoſed, as our diſſenting Enemies dare not be ſo impudently malicious, as openly to condemn it of ſinfulneſs or unlawfulneſs. Neither can I ever expect (as wiſe as they are in their own eyes) that they will be ſo preſumptuous, as to attempt the preſenting us with a Form of Publick Worſhip, with all the preciſe method of that Order and Decency, that ought to be uſed in it, in which they will pretend to better and tranſcend the excellency of our *Liturgy*, which is preſcribed and uſed among us.

—Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis,
Candidus imperti, ſi non, his utere mecum.

And until they can do this, their wiſdom is to ſtudy to be quiet, and conform to this, till they can find out and propoſe a better Method of our publick Worſhipping of God beyond all exceptions, that they will abide by.

And now, I ſay, what Subject of the Church of *England* can reaſonably deſert or reject our *Liturgy*, *which is viſibly the beſt that is extant to us upon ſober Conſideration?*

And how can I but ſtand amazed, that the *Common Service*, as preſcribed, ſhould by ſo many of our Neighbours not only be neglected but contemned, when it can neither be juſtly blamed nor amended.

Certainly, I am not uncharitable (but ſhould be too conniving if I did forbear) to declare a want of Religion and Reaſon in thoſe men, that run away to the flocks of our pretended Companions, that hold no Uniform Communion that is Viſible; When, no worſhip of God is evident; no practice of the Peoples Devotion; no vocal Confeſſion of the Believers Faith; no offering any ſacrifice of Praiſe: and yet, every Chriſtian is bound to Conform in all thoſe things, as well as the Miniſter, in every Believing Congregation.

Why will ye go away from us, *O ye of little faith*, we hold faſt the *words* and *practice* of eternal life.

Friendly

Friendly Perſwaſives to my Country-men.

COme then, my beloved Countrymen, ſince theſe things are ſo, that *an Uniform profeſſion of Faith muſt be maintained in Believing Societies*, and ſith by our *Liturgy*, according to Goſpel Rules, we are ordered and directed to this reaſonable Service. Let us lay aſide all prejudice and partiality, all contentious humors. Let there be no longer a Spirit of *Oppoſition*, or wilful *Contradiction*, be found among us. Let us follow after the exerciſe of thoſe things that make for *Peace*, and wherewithal we may beſt edifie one another. *Whatever things are honeſt*, *whatever things are juſt*, *whatever things are pure*, let's think and conclude of the practice of ſuch things. Let us endeavour to bend our ſelves to the quiet of the Church of God, and to *hold the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*. Let's evidence, the God of hope hath filled us, as with all *joy*, ſo with all *peace in Believing*. There is but *One* Truth, but *One* Faith among us; let there be but *One* Spirit, but *One* Conſcience. Let us ſhew, the God of *Patience* and *Conſolation* hath granted us *to be like-minded*. Let's not forſake the *Aſſembling of our ſelves together*, *as the manner of ſome is*, *but let us hold faſt the form of ſound words*, and the *profeſſion of our Faith without wavering*. Let there be no *diviſions*, but let us ſpeak the ſame thing, to declare we are perfectly joyned together in the *ſame* mind, and in the *ſame* Judgment.

Let there be no diviſions among us about *Miniſters*, account of them as Stewards of the *Myſteries* of God; and yet your *Faith* ſtands not in the *wiſdom of Men*, but in the *power of God*. Have their *Perſons* not ſo much in admiration, as if lords of your *Faith* by Preaching, only eſteem them highly for their *works* ſake, whereby they lead you to the *holding faſt the Profeſſion of your Faith*, and the true exerciſe of right *Godlineſs*, *which hath the promiſe*, *&c.*

And, as in your ſpeeches you declare your *Unanimity* in your holy Aſſemblies, ſo in your *Behaviour* let there be Uniformity. Let your *Converſation be ſuch as becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt*, and *let all things be done decently and in order*, and *reverently* as in the Houſe and preſence of the living God. Worſhip God in the beauty of *Holineſs*, ſo as if an *Unbeliever come among you*, *he may be convinced*, *and fall down and worſhip God alſo*, becauſe he ſees, *verily*, *of a truth God is in the midſt of you*. It is the fit time for Chriſt to be born in us, when *Unity* is among us. In a calm night the *Dew* deſcends to the Earths refreſhment; and *Grace* is like to come down to us when we are in the *way of Peace*. *Finally*, *Brethren*, *farewel*; *be perfect*, *be of good comfort*, *be of one mind*, *live in peace*, as directed, *and the God of love and peace ſhall be with you*.

A M E N.

Propo-

Propoſition II.

The wilful Omiſſion or Recuſancy of any Believing Subjects Conformity to thoſe Rules, is an heinous Sin, and a dangerous Diſobedience.

I *Heartily beg of the Candid Reader ſo much charity to believe it as true, what I publickly declare and avow,* That I am a Reformed Chriſtian of the Church of *England, and,* that I ſhall never attempt to perſwade my fellow Subjects to any practice that is ungodly, or contrary to the Rules of the Goſpel. *And be aſſured (whoever thou art) that I ſincerely deſire every man may come to the knowledge and practice of Truth and be ſaved; and therefore I dare not by a flattering compliance,*

or connivance, ſooth any man in the errour of his way, which will lead him ſecurely to his deſtruction. And I dare not daub over Recuſancy, *as ſome deſire, with a paint and varniſh of a trifling* weakneſs *or* infirmity, *or palliate it over with a falſe pretence of* tender Conſcience, *when it will prove, if conſidered,* an heinous ſin, *and* a dangerous Diſobedience.

Give me leave therefore without offence, if thou beeſt willing to be Informed, to bring to thy Remembrance what I have formerly delivered, and am ready to defend concerning our Canons and Rules of Uniformity, *preſcribed about the Publick exerciſe of Religion.*

1. Our Governours, as ſubordinate under Chriſt, do not Rule their Believing Subjects, arbitrarily; but by Laws ſubordinate to the Rules of the Goſpel.

2. All that the power of Governours can reach unto, in a Viſible Church, is to order and direct Externals in the publick exerciſe of Religion.

3. That the right exerciſe of true Religion, is the open profeſſion of Faith.

4. Of that open Profeſſion, there muſt be Uniformity.

5. Every Baptized Subject of *England* is obliged to conform to ſuch Laws preſcribed. *For to* command *or* prohibit, *as the Goſpel directs, is warrantable.*

And all our Laws, *to the Common ſort of Believing Subjects, are according to thoſe Rules.*

If Natural, *or expreſsly* Evangelical, *there can be no diſpute, if a Chriſtian, thou art bound to obey.*

And

And if the Laws be Positive *or* Humane, *and not againſt Nature, or Injuſt; thy Obligation is divine, and thy Submiſſion is natural, being thou art to* ſubmit to every Ordinance of man for the Lords ſake.

SECT. I.

Let us determine and agree, what we are to underſtand by thoſe Laws, and the Conformity to them, that the Believing Subject of England *is bound to obſerve.*

THE Governours aim and care is not only at the keeping and diverting from the People what is *grievous* and *inconvenient*, which will render their lives wretched and miſerable; but alſo at the compaſſing and injoyning the things that are *good* and *pleaſant*, which make their lives happy and comfortable.

For theſe two diſtinct ends, there muſt be two diſtinct ſort of Laws. Some *Prohibitive*, forbidding and reſtraining *Tranſgreſſion*, which is the way to divert Evils feared; ſome *Preceptive*, by conforming to which Laws, the People might attain the *Good* deſigned and propounded.

And becauſe Man is not to be ſatisfied, barely with *eſcapes* of Evil and Miſery, but with obtaining a confluence of *Bleſſings*, which may miniſter

ſome competency of *Content* to him in this his preſent condition; therefore he is to make it his buſineſs, not only to reſpect the Laws *Prohibitive*, but thoſe that are *Preceptive* are to be regarded eſpecially.

And when we obſerve, the *Happineſs* of Man doth not only depend upon the *love* and *comforts* communicated from his Neighbour, but upon the *favour* and *bleſſings* of God; hence it muſt evidently appear, that as man, in a Society, ought to have reſpect to the Laws of *Honeſty*, that he live quietly and comfortably with his Neighbour; ſo is he to regard the Rules that direct him to the practice of true *Piety*, which will make him to walk acceptably before his God. And the *Preceptive* Laws that concern *Piety* ought primarily to be regarded, becauſe the Conforming to them, will bring upon him the Bleſſings of God.

Now we are to agree to underſtand, that our preſent Diſcourſe relates to Laws of this ſort, *viz. Preceptive Laws of Piety* that are wiſely and piouſly ordered by our Governours, according to Goſpel Rules, that command the *decent* and *reverent* attendance, and *joynt Concurrence* of every Believing Subject of *England*, in the Uniform exerciſe of Religion, as in the Book of *Common-Prayer* is ordered and preſcribed.

Theſe *Preceptive Rules* of Uniform worſhip, as in our *Liturgy* the People are directed, are the Laws by us intended, and ought by Believing Subjects of *England*, principally to be regarded, and *conformity* to ſuch Laws ought to be obſerved accordingly.

For

For as a *Negative Happineſs* will not content us, no more ought a *Negative Holineſs*: ſo a Believers care muſt be, to be truly *vertuous* and *religious*. The holy Soul, that intends a thorough *ſanctification*, reſts not ſatisfied that he is not *vicious*, when he knows his being *vertuous* and *truly religious* is that which will pleaſe his God.

For to ceaſe from evil of *ſin* only, will keep us from evil of *puniſhment* and *judgment* which is threatned; but to do *well*, is that which will bring us to good, and to the *mercies* and *bleſſings* promiſed.

Conformity then to *Preceptive Rules of Piety* is neceſſary for our *comfort* and *well-being*, and one of the principal Duties of an *Engliſh* Chriſtian. And the faſhioning and framing of his *Words* and *Actions*, according to the Canons and Lines in our *Liturgy* preſcribed and directed, is that *Conformity* we now underſtand. That our *Converſes* and *demeanour* in the Worſhip of God, be accommodately ordered and commenſurate to the Rules of the *Liturgy*. That none of the lines or lineaments be careleſly pretermitted. That upon our private fancy, no tumor or exuberancy be added ſuperſtitiouſly, that we admit of neither *exceſs* or *defect* that may ſpoil that beauty of *Holineſs*, whereby we may repreſent an exact ſymmetry of parts, according to that exquiſite Original and Copy which is ſet before us.

This I mean by that *Conformity* we are to attend and heed. Happy ſhould we be if a People once in ſuch a caſe; yea, bleſſed ſhould we be, if we could thus *decently Worſhip our God*.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Wilful Omiſſion or Recuſancy of this Conformity, is a Sin or Diſobedience.

THere be two great miſtakes that our Phariſaical Fiduciaries are eminently guilty of about Omiſſion. One is, *that omiſſion of Carnal ſins prohibited, Preſents them Saints, and is all the vertue by them deſired*; the other is, *that the omiſſion of external duties of Piety that are commanded, is no ſin, and is not at all feared.* But as pure as this Generation may ſeem in their own eyes, yet in neither caſes can they make it appear, that they are cleanſed from their wickedneſs, when from the firſt miſtake they ſwell with *Pride*, and from the ſecond miſtake they muſt diſdain *Humility.*

They ſay, *They are not open Blaſphemers, nor Riotous, nor Thieves, nor Adulterers, nor Murtherers*, and we may believe them; yet while this *negative Holineſs* content them, they are ready to account themſelves Righteous, and deſpiſe others. Thus they chooſe eaſieſt Duties, and neglect the greater, advance one to the ſuppreſſing of another, and, without regret, ſecurely paſs by obedience to *Preceptive Rules*, and with a partial and piecemeal *Conformity* they deceive themſelves. But we have otherwiſe learned the mind of Chriſt.

For in reaſon, when *Vertue* lies *in medio*, and is only a ſtreight line and tendency to Happineſs, as *Mora-*

Morality teach us; the *defect* as well as the *exceſs*, will keep us from ever coming at this end. And when every Believer is bound to obey the *Goſpel*, that expects to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, as *Divinity* teacheth us.

Certainly, bare *unholineſs*, *uncharitableneſs*, *infidelity*, *unpeacableneſs*, that are but ceſſations and ſuſpenſions of thoſe due Acts that be commanded, and ought not to be left undone, cannot content any true Believer. For no perſon, be he either *Child*, *Servant*, or *Subject*, if he neglects to do what he is injoyned, but is juſtly looked upon as *diſobedient. To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is ſin*, Jam.4.17.

But when *Omiſſion* arrives at that height, to be *wilful*, it become that ſin we would have notified and avoided. When men declare their *love* and *choice*, by an open and continued ſeparation from Holy exerciſes as commanded, ſuch wilful Omiſſion is rightly called *Recuſancy*; being an open and declared refuſal of doing that ſervice and holy Duties they are commanded.

And, if ſeriouſly conſidered, I know not how our Officers, in our ſeveral Pariſhes, can be excuſed or acquitted of the guilt of *Perjury*, when of forty Perſons, that wilfully omit and deſpiſe the *Divine Service* and *Sacrament*, they cannot in their Returns at Aſſizes, or Seſſions, find one open Recuſant; when certainly, a wilful *Omiſſion* or *Recuſancy* of due Obedience, deſerves both *ſentence* and *puniſhment*, when it is an *heinous ſin, and Diſobedience.*

SECT.

SECT. III.

Wilful Omiſſion or Recuſancy of Conformity to theſe Laws, is an Heinous ſin and Diſobedience.

SO much the Nobler the *Law* fixed and eſtabliſhed is, ſo much the greater the ſin, and the more grievous the *tranſgreſſion* of that Law.

Now *Conformity* to the firſt and greateſt Law of *Piety*, is a nobler Vertue than *Conformity* to the Rules of *Charity*; and *averſion* from that Conformity muſt be a greater ſin, becauſe then we turn away from GOD, who is infinitely better than *Men*, or any Creature whatſoever.

The firſt and greateſt Commandment is, *To love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul*: theſe muſt reſpect God indeed; but, *with all thy ſtrength*, this muſt relate to Man. For the *ſtrength* of a viſible Chriſtian is demonſtrable to Man by *outward actions*, when *ſtrength* exerts it ſelf by doing what is Commanded.

Omiſſion therefore, of a viſible exerciſe of *Piety*, muſt be concluded, in reaſon, a ſin of the greateſt ſize, ſince it is a tranſgreſſion of the greateſt *Commandment*.

Again, Tranſgreſſions of a general, comprehenſive Law of *Piety*, are greater than the tranſgreſſion of a ſingle, particular Law, that command a ſingle Duty. But omiſſion of *Uniformity* preſcribed,

bed, is a tranſgreſſion of a general comprehenſive Law of *Piety*.

Faith comprehends all the duties of Chriſtian Obedience, and what doth it profit a man, in a Viſible Church, to ſay, *he hath Faith*, if he hath no *Works*, and do not make his *faith* appear by *Confeſſion*. If we *know* we muſt *acknowledge*; if we *believe* we muſt *ſpeak*. *He that offends in this* one *point is guilty of all*, Jam. 2. 14.

And, if offending againſt a particular prohibitive Law of *Charity*, renders a man guilty of tranſgreſſing every part of that Law, how much more if a man offends a comprehenſive Law of *Piety*? In the Judgment of Man, ſuch a Perſon muſt be lookt upon to have *denied the Faith*, *&c.* So, if any man would ask, what is the Name of this ſin? it muſt be anſwered *Legion*, *for they are many*. When moſt of the Commandements of the firſt Table are openly tranſgreſt by this *wilful Omiſſion*.

And, if deliberately conſidered, it muſt be acknowledged, That theſe ſins of *wilful Omiſſion* or *Recuſancy* of Obedience, to preceptive Laws of *Piety*, are greater ſins than ſins of *Commiſſion* againſt the prohibitive Laws of the ſecond Table, that concern *Charity*, in reſpect of ſeveral Circumſtances that ſuch Tranſgreſſors are involved in, which muſt needs aggravate theſe ſins exceedingly.

For theſe ſins of *Omiſſion* are open and manifeſt, but thoſe ſins of *Commiſſion* are many times ſecret and hid. Therefore, many times, ſins of *Commiſſion* fall under the Judgment of God only; but ſins of *wilful Omiſſion* fall certainly under the judg-

ment

ment and condemnation of Men: and therefore it is undeniably just and reasonable, that Religious Magistrates make severe animadversions upon those sins especially.

And, he that judgeth and condemneth his Neighbour for *Hypocrisie*, though he judgeth truly, yet he judgeth rashly and uncharitably, because such sins are indiscernible to man; but when *Profaness* and *Impiety* are manifest by a *wilful Recusancy*, such sins go before men to Judgment, and Officers may accuse and condemn such notorious Crimes, justly and warrantably.

And sins that are done *impudently* and *shamelesly*, are worse sins than those that are done *modestly* and *closely*.

Now beastly sins of *Commission* are committed secretly, 1 *Thess.* 5.7. they seek the *night* to conceal them, and *darkness* to cover them. But if men will be openly guilty of their Abominations, and not be at all ashamed; if they will declare and publish their sins like *Sodom*, and make their Faces harder than a Rock, and refuse to return, a Visitation is lawful and justifiable upon such *open sin*; and the Magistrate is not just that will not take vengeance upon such wilful Transgressours.

A second aggravation of sin may be, when a sin is *Electively* and *voluntarily* committed. For this must be confessed, that *Vertue* or *Vice* are more or less Meritorious, as they are more or less Voluntary. A sin must be greater that is upon deliberate *Choice* committed, than that which is done upon *surprizal*, through the prevalence of a Temptation, suddenly and inconsiderately.

Now

Now, ſins of *Commiſſion* have many of theſe Excuſes; Either men are baſely or degenerouſly indulging the Beſtial part, and ſo are tranſported with the preſent impreſſion of ſome ſweet delight that pleaſeth the *ſenſe*, which admits of no *deliberation*. Or elſe through *Pride*, *Envy*, *Malice*, or *Revenge*, which would be ſatisfied, men have hurried headlong into irregular Attempts. Or elſe through a *fawning*, *flattering Compliance* with the prevalent Humors of the Times, men have been miſled with the Cuſtomary practice of a multitude, and have preſt, like Beaſts, *Non quo eundum*, *ſed qua itur*; Following bad Example to do evil, and without natural affection, not guided by Reaſon, have fallen into the worſt of ſins of the worſt of Times.

But now, what Temptation or excuſe can any man alledge or pretend for *wilful Omiſſion*, or *Recuſancy?* Other ſinners have had either *pleaſure* or *profit* to quicken the Temptation, and make it more active, and more prevalent; but what fruit, what benefit can the *Recuſant* alleadge for not doing what is injoyn'd? He abſolutely chooſeth the *evil*, and refuſeth the *good* voluntarily, without Temptation; ſure this ſin is to be accounted without excuſe.

Another aggravation of a Sin is, when it is done *reſolutely* and *obſtinately*. Now, what is done *reſolutely* and *conſtantly*, if bad, is worſe than what is done *uncertainly*, and *contingently*.

Now, ſins of *Commiſſion*, many of them have their abatement and weakning by Age and Time; but ſins of *Omiſſion* gather ſtrength by continuance, and make men more indiſpoſed to forſake them.

For

For ſins of *Commiſſion*, men are aſhamed, weary of them, and forſake them in time; but for ſins of *Omiſſion*, we reſt ſecurely, and delight in them. In this caſe, there's no probability men ſhould take care to be *well*, who never are ſenſible they are *ſick*.

They make choice of their *Deluſion*, and willingly would be given up to the Continuance of their *Abominations*. We ſee their *obſtinacy*, and reſolved *impenitency*. And this muſt be accounted another aggravation.

Another aggravation of a Sin may be, if it be againſt a *Promiſe* and *Covenant* ſolemnly made to the contrary.

Every man is bound *ſtare pactis & promiſſis*, ſo it cannot reaſonably be denied, but a *wilful Omiſſion* of duties of Piety in a Baptized Subject, who hath declared and ſignified firmly his profeſſion of holy Obedience to the Faith, is far worſe than a wilful Omiſſion of a *Jew* or *Infidel*, that never promiſed obſervance to *Goſpel Rules*, and never made *Profeſſion*.

Heb. 10. The *wilful ſin* was not an *inviſible*, but a *viſible* Recidivation; For this muſt in reaſon be accounted a viſible and interpretative *Apoſtacy*, *drawing back*, *and falling off from his Profeſſion*, declared by his *wilful omiſſion*, which by Promiſe and Vow he had engaged himſelf to perform. And what ſenſe the Divine Author, in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, had of this ſin, is eaſie to be gathered from this tenth Chapter.

The Holy Author directs his Epiſtle to a Society of Believers by *Baptiſme*, externally united and ſancti-

ſanctified to be viſible Members of a *Chriſtian* Society, that had not power to diſcern *ſpirits* or *intention*, but judge they might of Externals, *words* or *actions*. He wrote therefore to them, *v.* 23, 24, 25. to take care of their *Carriage* and *Converſation* that was ſenſibly to be diſcerned in their Religious Aſſemblies. That they did not decline or forſake *Aſſembling*; nor in thoſe Aſſemblies, *profeſſion of Faith*, nor *mutual Exhortation*, nor *provocation to good Works*: For the *Blood of the Covenant* by theſe wilful Omiſſions, would be accounted an *unholy thing*, and ſo was *doing deſpight to the Spirit of Grace*; and ſo throw away the probable means to get the helpful aſſiſtance of the *Spirit of Grace*, which was ready to attend upon them that were frequently buſied in thoſe holy Miniſtrations. For the *Blood of the Covenant* did ſanctifie them, as a viſible Society of the *Faithful*, to Religious exerciſes, which if they fell away from, they ſinned *wilfully*, and muſt look for a ſubſequent puniſhment.

And now, I humbly beg of my well-meaning Country-men, that *ſeparate* and *withdraw* themſelves from us, that they would conſiderately receive theſe things with the ſame ſpirit that I have written them, without gall of bitterneſs, or deſire of Revenge, and with meekneſs and holy fear. Be not wiſe in your own eyes; think ſoberly of your ſelves, and your waies: *Be not high-minded but fear.* Be not without fear, to *add ſin unto ſin*; weigh not things with a *falſe Ballance*; put not *light for darkneſs*, nor *darkneſs for light*, *good for evil*, *&c.* This will bring woe and abomination.

This the way, while you clamour againſt others *Superſtition*, to be guilty of the ſame you condemn, while wilfully you ſtand upon your miſtaken Perſwaſion.

I know not how far you may flatter your ſelves with the Opinion you have aſſumed to your ſelves, and gained from others of your *Sanctity*; yet upon right deliberation, you muſt conclude with me, *While you wilfully omit, or refuſe, to conform to the Preceptive Rules of Piety preſcribed, you are guilty of tranſgreſſing the greateſt and moſt comprehenſive Commandement.*

And, if thou beeſt involved in thoſe Circumſtances that uſually attend and aggravate theſe ſins; if thou ſinneſt yet *openly*, *voluntarily*, *perfidiouſly*, and *impenitently*, thou wilt render thy ſelf guilty of a moſt notorious Crime; and, without *repentance* and *amendment*, thou wilt haſten thy own miſery, and contributeſt, to thy power, to bring ſpeedy and inevitable ruine, upon the moſt flouriſhing *Church* and *Kingdom* in the World. And this puts me upon the fourth Section.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Recuſancy is a dangerous ſin, and hurtful Diſobedience.

IT is a great part of wiſdom, to ponder the way of our feet: And now, becauſe conſidering the iſſue and end of our *Actions* will keep us from doing amiſs, give me leave mildly to repreſent, upon an impartial ſurvey, the dreadful conſequences of this ſin, thoſe curſed effects it certainly brings upon all Orders of men throughout the whole Nation.

The Injury it offers to *King* and *Parliament*, and all thy Governours both *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical*; while thou declareſt manifeſtly, thou ſuſpecteſt their *goodneſs*, doubteſt of their *wiſdom*, deſpiſeſt their *Authority*, and to thy utmoſt (by thy wilful *Recuſancy*) intimateſt to others, *That they have raſhly, and inconſiderately, impoſed Commands that are unlawful and unwarrantable*; and by this evil Example, miſguideſt thy Neighbour into a dangerous Diſobedience. For when other ſins of *Commiſſion* reach to the injury of a perſon, or Family or two, this ſin of *wilful Omiſſion* is extenſively hurtful to all ſorts of Men in the Society, and diſturbs the publick *peace* of all that are among us.

Theſe ſins are dreadful and deteſtable, not only becauſe, making *Diviſions*, they certainly turn

themſelves out of *Church-membership*, that are guilty of them; but when theſe men run into *Dyoscias*, and ſeparate into *Sects* and *Factions*, and in their Meetings, make it their buſineſs to deprave or defame the *Divine Service*, and *Uniformity*, preſcribed by Religious Governours; Theſe things muſt highly aggravate their Crime, and ſadly increaſe our miſery, and this we ſenſibly perceive by too woful experience.

It is no pleaſure to me to ſee, what I heartily bewail, the deplorable eſtate we are in at this time, in this poor diſtracted Nation, by that *wilful Recuſancy* and *ſinful Separation*, that by our tameneſs and connivance, we have ſuffered unhappily to thrive and ſpread among us. When every perſon and party that hath deſerted the Communion of our Church, covers the deformity of this Errour with a Cloak of pretended *Conſcience*, and proudly and unyieldingly idolizeth his miſtaken *Judgment*, and limits his affection to his own Party of the ſame *Perſwaſion*, and betrays his diſaffections to thoſe of *ſound Judgments*, by venting his *oppoſition* wrathfully, with bitter Invectives againſt them.

And thoſe Parts and Endowments men ſhould uſe in *cloſing* and *healing* our Breaches, they miſemploy in *widening* them. Every one is wiſer in his own eyes than his *Ruler* or *Teacher*, and pertinaciouſly defends his own Fancy, and juſtifies unyeildingly his own Perſwaſion.

Diverſity of miſled *Judgments*, and pretended *Conſcienees*, have cauſed an alienation of *Affections*, and hence *wrath* and *bitterneſs* hath broke out into

con-

contemptuous Cartiages, Sections, and *provoking Expreſſions*. That in Church matters our ſeveral *Factions* ſhew nothing but *Ataxy* and *diſtraction*. And in matters of State, from mens wilful diſobedience to lawful Commands, an inclination is diſcovered to tend to *Sedition* and *Rebellion*.

The religious *Ruler*, and faithful *Miniſter*, muſt needs be grieved and diſquieted to ſee our Reformed Profeſſion ſo much blaſphemed, the *Goſpel* and its *Faith*, ſo much diſgraced and deſpiſed, and the Name of *Chriſt* and his *Cauſe* ſo much diſhonoured.

And what honeſt heart, that loves the *King* and *Church of England*, but muſt be ſad and bemoan it; That *Peace* and *Love* (which are the cement and glory of any Church and Nation) ſhould, by theſe our *Diviſions*, be ſeen to wax faint and languiſh, and be even expiring in the midſt of us.

And let any now (that thinks moſt lightly of the *Diviſions*, and ſtands moſt for *Liberty*) tell me, if he can, and inſtance in any one Order of men that is not injured by them. For the *King* and the *Parliament* are rendred Vile, and their *Authority* contemptible, while their greateſt and beſt Laws, about the *Publick exerciſe of Religion*, are neglected and deſpiſed. The *Proteſtant* of *England*, that is truly Religious, muſt be offended and grieved, to ſee his Neighbour, by his *wilful Separation*, continue in an open and heinous ſin.

By this thy *Relations*, *Equals*, and *Inferiours* muſt be injured in all probability, while thou ſeduceſt the poor and weak by thy evil Example, and makeſt them to think meanly and diſhonoura-

bly of our eſtabliſhed *Liturgy*, the moſt neceſſary and the moſt Religious *Conſtitution* that is viſibly extant in the World.

By this eſpecially hath come the Univerſal decay of true *Chriſtian Piety*, and epidemical diſeſteem and averſneſs from the *publick Worſhip of God.*

From this, as from a Fountain, hath that deluge of *Sins* flowed forth, that hath overſpread, and overwhelmed this unhappy Nation.

We cannot deny but that almoſt every where we diſcover *ſinful prejudices*, *ſuperſtition*, *blindneſs of heart*, *Raſh judging* and *cenſuring* both of holy Perſons and ſound Doctrines; *Pride*, *vain-glory* and *hypocriſie*; *Envy*, *hatred*, *malice* and *uncharitableneſs.*

We cannot deny, but *Seditions* and *privy Conſpiracies*, *falſe Doctrine* and *Hereſie*, *hardneſs of Heart* and *contempt of Gods Word and Commandements*, are too manifeſtly to be ſeen in the midſt of us.

Wrath, *emulations*, *bitterneſs*, *clamour*, *evil ſpeaking*, *whiſpering*, *backbiting* and *detraction*, *lying* and *ſlandering*, *&c.* all theſe ſins and miſcarriages, are but the numerous and unlucky Off-ſpring of *Recuſancy* and *wilful Separation*, that I cannot but in anguiſh of Spirit cry out, *Curſed be the womb of SCHISME that bare theſe things, and the Paps that hath given them ſuck.*

For theſe things ſake, if not repented of, the *wrath of God* muſt haſten upon us as *wilful Children of Diſobedience.*

Neither

Neither hath this deteſtable ſin made us thus miſerable among our ſelves, but hath rendred us unhappy among *other Nations*; when it hath brought a diſ-repute of us, and a diſ-eſteem of our *Religion*, almoſt in all parts of the World.

Turks, *Heathens*, *Pagans*, *Jews*, not only contemn, but blaſpheme our *Church* and *Faith*, becauſe of the *diviſions* and *diſſenſions* of our Profeſſors.

And when the concord of Profeſſors *Uniformity* preſerve the beauty and lovelineſs of a Church, which attracts all mens *admiration* and *affection*, undoubtedly *Diviſions* and *Factions* muſt bring that deformity upon any Nation, which muſt make it *loathed* and *abhorred*.

And how can we in reaſon expect, that others ſhould deſire to be United to us, who are not United among our ſelves. We can never hope, but they that are without will ſhun us as *infectious*, as long as this deadly diſeaſe cleaves cloſe unto us.

I hear the ſad Complaints of my Countrymens fears, *That Popery is like to be brought in among us*. And this I confeſs is my fear alſo; for while we wilfully maintain *Diviſions* and *Separations* among us, unqueſtionably we contribute to the utmoſt to that which we fear to fall upon us: And the way hath not been made more plain this hundred years for the return of *Popery* than we have lately made it by our *Diviſions*.

The *Papiſts* and *Jeſuits* very well know, they can never ſet up their own Church, till they have pulled down ours, which alone ſtand in competition for *precedence*, and outvies them. And to de-

ſtroy this our Church of *England*, which is the beſt ordered in the World, by our *Schiſms* and *Sects* we lend our helping hand moſt effectually. Who doth not ſee that we are running into that *Bondage* we pretend to abominate, while we endeavour to deſtroy *Uniformity* as it is preſcribed.

For out of the *Viſible Church* there is no ordinary way of Salvation; And there is no keeping up the face of a Viſible Church without *Uniformity*.

If therefore we wilfully perſiſt by our *Schiſme* to deſtroy *Uniformity* in the Church of *England*, when there is none to be found in our *ſeparated Congregations*, what remains, but we muſt willingly run to the Church of *Rome* if we will be ſaved.

All theſe things perpended, it muſt be concluded, *That wilful Recuſancy of* Conformity *or* Schiſme, *is not only an heinous but an hurtful ſin in reſpect of thoſe within us. It renders us diſeſteemed and contemned by thoſe without us. It contributes to the introduction and prevalency of* Popery *into the Nation.* And, *It is a dangerous ſin to Men themſelves that are guilty of it, when it renders them liable to the juſt condemnation both of Man and God.*

We are moſt affected with thoſe Evils that moſt nearly touch our ſelves. Conſider then thy own dangerous condition, who ever thou art that *ſeparateſt* from the Church of *England*, if thou perſiſteſt in thy wilful *Diſobedience*, and what muſt follow by the juſt Judgment both of Man and God,

Thou

Thou art guilty, at the faireſt, of the dreadful ſin of *Schiſme*, by thy voluntary *departure* and wilful *ſeparation* from the Communion of that Viſible Church, whereof once a Member. A ſin, by St. *Paul*, branded with the odious name of *Carnality*, 1 Cor. 3. 3. *Are ye not carnal? walk ye not as men?* And, Rom. 16. 17, 18. the ſame Apoſtle directs the Believing Brethren, to ſet this note and remark upon ſuch as cauſed and maintained *Diviſions*; *they were ſuch as did not ſerve the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and were to be avoided. Their fair *ſpeeches* and ſmooth *actions* in this caſe could not acquit but condemn them, whilſt both of them were uſed with this end by them, to deceive the hearts of the ſimple, and pervert their practice from the Uniform Communion of a Believing Society.

It is ſad, but true, that ſuch from Believers *Cenſure* and *Judgment* (if they will be directed by the Apoſtle, and perſwaded) muſt loſe the reputation of being *Chriſtians*, and be marked and noted for ſuch as are not *ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt*.

And further, if it be queſtioned, Whether continuing wilfully in a manifeſt ſin be inconſiſtent with the *ſtate of Grace*, or not? certainly, upon ſerious Inquiry, it muſt be determined *Affirmatively*. And it muſt be granted, upon the Reaſons forementioned, That *wilful Omiſſion* of the neceſſary Duties of *Piety* is an open ſin, and ſuch a ſin as withdraw men from the kindly operations of *Grace*, and makes God withhold and turn away his *Spirit* from a People, who waits to be gracious to his Servants, uſually, while in the exerciſe of *Holineſs*.

This

This deſpiſing of *Holy Duties*, puts a contempt, and offers deſpite to the *Spirit* of *Grace*: And certainly, the conſequence of that ſin is ſad enough, that makes God withhold his *Spirit* from men, ſuch *draw back to perdition* by their viſible Recidivation.

The effects and conſequences of this ſin, in probability, will be dreadful (as you have heard) among *Men*; and there will be a ſad iſſue of this ſin from the *Juſt GOD*, who not only will withdraw his *Grace*, but will manifeſt his diſpleaſure by his *wrath* which will come upon the *wilful Children of Diſobedience*. And good it will be for this ſinner in time to conſider, That although he may poſſibly eſcape the condemning Judgment of *fallible Man*, yet he cannot warrantably promiſe himſelf to eſcape in another day the condemnation of *Chriſt*. Sins of *Omiſſion*, that are obſtinately for the moſt part perſiſted in, will fare worſe than ſins of *Commiſſion* that oftimes are repented of, and will meet with a more ſevere Sentence from the mouth of Chriſt.

And the mind of Chriſt is clearly diſcovered unto us in this particular, *Matt.*25.41. when as accurſed, they ſhall hear that fearful *Diſcedite*, *Depart ye into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels*. And the ſin he chargeth them with, and ſentenceth them for, was a *wilful omiſſion* of Acts of *Charity*. *For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat; Thirſty, and ye gave me no drink; Naked, and ye cloathed me not, &c.*

Now, if for *wilful Omiſſion* of ſuch Acts of *Charity*, ſinners ſhall hear that fearful *Ite maledicti*, how

how juſtly may they hear the like dreadful Sentence for omiſſion of Acts of *Piety*: *You have not worſhipped mein the beauty of Holineſs*; *You have not ſpoken to my Praiſe, to make my Name glorious*; *You have not held faſt the open profeſſion of your Faith*, &c. For greater ſins, there cannot reaſonably be expected a leſſer Sentence, or eaſier puniſhment, from the moſt juſt Judge.

For ſinning thus wilfully, what can be looked for but *Judgment* and *fiery Indignation*. *If he that deſpiſed the publick Law* and polity of Moſes *was judged worthy of Death, of how much ſorer puniſhment ſhall he be thought worthy*, that *wilfully* deſpiſeth thoſe Rules that are commanded by the *Goſpel of Chriſt*. *If any man draw back* [*wilfully*] from his Profeſſion, when the ſoul of the Apoſtle took none, *what pleaſure can the ſoul of Chriſt take in him?*

And now my dear Country-men, that have been too long Diſſenters, who have ſtood at diſtance, and *ſeparated* from us, I humbly beſeech you in the Name of the *Lord Jeſus*, that you would conſider, That by your *Baptiſme* you have been dedicated to the *Obedience* of the *Faith* of which you have made profeſſion. And, by the Laws of the *Goſpel* you are bound to ſubmit to the Laws of the *Land*, preſcribed for the exerciſe of *Piety*. And that *wilful Omiſſion*, or *Recuſancy*, of Conformity to theſe Laws, is an heinous Sin, and a dangerous Diſobedience. A Tranſgreſſion againſt the *firſt* and greateſt *Commandement*; againſt a comprehenſive Law of *Piety*. It is a ſin not far off from a dangerous *Apoſtacy*.

We

We are ſure it is an accurſed *Schiſme.* It's a ſin of direful fruits to them within us; of dreadful conſequences to them without us. It's probably an introduction and advance to *Popery*, in the midſt of us. It's a ſin diſpleaſing to the *Spirit of Grace* and *Chriſt.* I would have ſo much charity to perſwade my ſelf, that many of you have been drawn into this ſin *ignorantly*, through *Unbelief.*

It is not my intent to write theſe things to ſhame you, but, as beloved, in meekneſs to warn you. Knowing all theſe Terrours, I would perſwade you as men, ſoberly to conſider the fearful dangers of this Sin, and to return to a right mind, and practice that which is warrantable, and to bend your ſelves to the *peace* of the Church, and *Unity* in the Worſhip of God. Mark them that have cauſed *Diviſions*, and hereafter avoid them. Let us follow *Peace* with all Believers, and the *practice of Holineſs*, that we may come at laſt together to the ſight of God.

And for you that have not *ſeparated* from us, but have aſſociated with us in the Faith of the *Goſpel*, go on, as *Juſt Ones* ſhould, to live the life of *Faith*, of which you have made profeſſion. *Be not of thoſe that draw back to perdition, but of thoſe that believe to the ſaving of your ſouls.* Be not led away with the *Errour* of the wicked, to fall from your *ſtedfaſtneſs. Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but reprove them.* Come not into their ſecrets, nor nigh their Habitations. Do not fawningly flatter, or countenance them; for thy *connivance* and *lenity* will

ſtrengthen

ſtrengthen them. Blow not the coals of theſe Sinners, leaſt thou be conſumed with the flames of their wild fire.

Let this be our main deſign, to baniſh all *Factions* and *Schiſmes*, which this day are the ſhame, and to bring back that *Uniformity* in the Worſhip of God, which was once this Nations glory. Let's mind thoſe things which tend to *peace* and *unity* in *Divine Service*, whereby we may beſt edifie one another. *Let us*, as Brethren, *be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, abounding in this work of our God, foraſmuch as we know our labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

But if any *wilfully* fall back, and *obſtinately* continue in this ſin, let ſuch take notice, *That Judgments are juſtly prepared for Scorners, and ſtripes for the backs of Fools.*

Propo-

Propoſition III.

The threatning and determining of Puniſhments againſt ſuch wilful Tranſgreſſors, is according to the dictates of Human Reaſon, and the conſtant practice of the Church of God.

THE *Tranſgreſſor* we mean, is the *Recuſant* who wilfully omits to conform to thoſe *Canons* and *Forms* preſcribed and ordered in our *Liturgy*, which are agreeable to the Rules of the *Goſpel*. And this *wilful Omiſſion* in every *Baptized* Subject, how ſlight or trivial ſoever

ever it may ſeem to be, I ſoberly and deliberately affirm and maintain to be a worſe ſin than *Murther*, *Theft*, *Adultery*, or any other ſingle ſin of Commiſſion; whereby the prohibitive Rule of *Charity* is tranſgreſſed, which is to be deteſted and avoided by every Believing perſon, who would live comfortably in any Believing Society.

For it being a *Tranſgreſſion* of the firſt and greateſt, and moſt comprehenſive Law of *Piety*, it muſt be a greater ſin than that which *tranſgreſſeth* a particular prohibitive Law that concerns *Charity*; that ſin being a *wilful averſion* from that way that directly leads to that full content and happineſs, which ought to be intended. And this we cannot but adviſedly conclude, when this ſin, for the moſt part, as we may ſenſibly perceive, is attended with thoſe circumſtances, which muſt aggravate the Crime exceedingly.

For when we obſerve ſuch *Tranſgreſſors* run into this ſin, not inconſiderately through *ſurprizal*, but deliberately and electively; not modeſtly, but impudently; not uncertainly or contingently, but conſtantly and obſtinately; when they ſtrive to be guilty of theſe Abominations, contrary to *Vows* and *Reſolutions*; and when we conſider the dreadful conſequences, what can we do leſs than without raſhneſs conclude, That ſuch are *heinous Tranſgreſſors*, and *dangerouſly Diſobedient*.

And when ſuch *Tranſgreſſors* are very rarely converted or amended by *monitions* or *perſwaſions*, it is but reaſonable and neceſſary that Religious Governours (if it can be) ſhould reſtrain them by the threatning and predetermination of *Puniſhments*.

For

For when *Governours* are to be ſet over Societies, to promote their publick good and happineſs, it is juſt and reaſonable, not only by propoſing *Rewards* they ſhould encourage their People to Religious and Vertuous Duties, which will render them happy and comfortable, but alſo by threatning and predetermining of *Puniſhments*, to reſtrain and deter them from evil and enormous Actions, which will render their lives wretched and miſerable.

They miſtake dangerouſly, and wander no little out of the way, who make it their work to defame the *threatning* and *determining* of Puniſhments with the odious ſlander of *Malice* and *Bitterneſs*, when theſe things are evidences of the Rulers *Love* and *Care*, who are ſet over a People by God to be a Terrour, and affright the People from doing Evil by ſuch manifeſt Determinations.

If Perſons were ſo well diſpoſed, that they would be perſwaded to be good by *Counſels* or *Monitions*, or would be ſo ingenious as to be drawn to Religious and Vertuous Actions by propoſal of *Rewards*, then my mercy is ſuch, as I would have *threatning* and *determination* of *Puniſhments* forborn.

But, when we ſee Men are led by *Senſe* and *Cuſtome* more than *Reaſon*, and are generally vain in their Imaginations, diſorderly in their Affections, wild and precipitantly irregular in their Actions, it is needful to limit and circumſcribe this their beaſtly *Exorbitancy* with an Hedge of Thorns, and to bound them with a Fence of *Puniſhments*. When *fooliſhneſs* is bound up in moſt mens childiſh hearts,

hearts, that incline them to *extravaganey*, it is but the fatherly love and care of good *Rulers*, by the Rod of *Correction*, to drive it away. Thus are they truly repreſented to be *Patres patriæ*, and *Rulers* cannot be blamed for harſhneſs, if they carry themſelves towards their *Subjects*, with the ſame tenderneſs that the beſt *Fathers* carry themſelves towards their *Children*.

It cannot reaſonably be accounted a ſign of an unnatural *Cruelty*, but an indication of a diſcreet *Mercy*, for a Father to threaten and ſhake the Rod over his Child; when he does not this with a deſign to *vex* and *torture* him, but with an intent to reſtrain him from *inconſiderateneſs* and *vanity* that will diſtract him, and to move him to be circumſpect, to receive that *inſtruction* which he deſires ſhould be inſtilled into him.

And thus it is with the good Rulers in their threatning of *Bonds*, *Stripes* or *Death*, upon ſuch or ſuch Tranſgreſſions. It cannot be thought, their deſign in this is to *torment* and *ruine* their Subjects, but only by ſetting the inconveniencies and grievances that attend *exorbitancies* before their eyes, they would ſtop them, and divert them from irregular courſes, and move and quicken them to the care of conformity to their *Rules* and *Directions*, which will certainly felicitate them.

And in all this, They are but Gods *Deputies*, and ſhew themſelves like him whom they ought to repreſent, who uſed this method to his own People when he gave the Law at *Sinah*, when there was *thundrings and lightnings*, *noiſe of the Trumpet*, *and the Mountain ſmoaking*; theſe all to

work in the People an *holy fear*, which is the beginning of wiſdom, to depart from evil that they ſin not, and to quicken them to obſerve his holy Commandements.

And ſure we cannot in reaſon think, that either God, or the Ruler, deſigns *vexation* or *deſtruction* when they threaten them. It is natural to them to ſhew *Mercy* and *Compaſſion*. They are not inclined *to afflict willingly*, *nor to greive the Sons of men*. They are loath to *torment* or *deſtroy*, who would have all men come to the practice of *Truth* and be ſaved.

He never can be imagined in reaſon, to intend *wounding* or *deſtruction*, who gives warning before hand of the blow; by that the Creature prepares it ſelf (if it hath either *ſenſe* or *reaſon*) to guard it, or eſcape it. The threatning of *Miſery*, *Death*, or *Hell*, is a Mercy, without which we were like ſecurely to run upon them.

If *Miſeries* were abſolutely decreed or determined, that were *Cruelty* indeed; but when threatned conditionally, that is a *Mercy*.

Thus it is evident, *Deſtruction is of thy ſelf*. Charge not unjuſtly and injuriouſly that as a fault, upon *God* or thy *Rulers*, which by thy own guilt thou pulleſt upon thy own head.

They threatned it upon condition of thy *Tranſgreſſion* and *Diſobedience*, ſo 'tis thy *wilful Diſobeying* that gives thee up voluntary to the puniſhment. Thou art contented to torment thy ſelf. Thou ſaweſt the danger, and wouldſt run into it. Thou kneweſt the puniſhment, and wouldſt pull it upon thy own head. Thou conſpiredſt againſt thy

own

own peace and ſafety. That thou periſheſt, it is thy own choice; for chuſing the *Sin*, thou didſt chuſe the *Puniſhment*. Thy Blood lies upon thy ſelf. Thou periſheſt without others fault, and leaveſt thy ſelf without excuſe.

Thus it is evident, *Unnatural Cruelty* is falſly and injuriouſly charged upon *God* or the *Rulers*, for threatning or determining *Puniſhments*; when the Offender only is Cruel to himſelf, who *voluntarily* (though he hath warning) runs upon them.

Again, Rulers, which are *Gods* on Earth, ſhew themſelves moſt Rational, when they ſhew themſelves moſt to reſemble God, by manifeſting thoſe Divine excellencies to be conſpicuouſly in them, which render God glorious in his Providence throughout the World. And this manifeſtation they moſt clearly give, when they deliberately determine *Puniſhments* before-hand, to be inflicted upon open Tranſgreſſions.

Firſt, Thus they manifeſt *Wiſdom*: For if determinations of *Puniſhments* were ſudden upon a provocation of a ſenſible Injury, they might be ſuſpected and deemed the irruptions of a diſorderly *Paſſion*; but when fixed before hand, they cannot but be judged the reſult and product of ſober *Reaſon*. And that is *wiſdom* or *prudence*, which ordereth and diſpoſeth fit and ſuitable means to a right end.

Now the right *end* and *mark* that Governours are to intend, is to promote the *good* and *prevent all evil* from the Society. Now the means to prevent *evil*, is to divert People from Actions that are

irregular and *vitious*, which are the cauſe of all *Miſeries* that happen on a Nation.

Now no ſuch hindrance or reſtraint can be put upon People from *evil actions*, as to put them upon the thoughts and conſiderations of thoſe *miſeries* and *inconveniences* that will ſucceed. And this is moſt probably done by the publication of thoſe determined *Judgments* and *Inconveniences* that muſt inevitably follow upon *Irregularities*. Theſe are moſt likely to prove the moſt effectual means, to keep *rational Creatures* from running into them.

For, *Malum quâ malum, non eſt eligendum*; No man chooſeth what is abſolutely Evil, either *ſin* or *greivance*. No man will perſiſt obſtinately in that way, that in the end, if he turns not from it, he ſees will *ruine* him undoubtedly.

Evil of *Miſery* before a mans face (unleſs he be mad) will make a man turn from evil of *Iniquity*; ſo the publication of the Magiſtrates certain determination of *Judgment* and *Miſeries*, unavoidably to happen upon wilful Tranſgreſſors, is the manifeſtation of the Rulers *Prudence*, being the moſt probable means to keep their Subjects from *ſin* and *deſtruction*.

2. The *ſecond* thing wherein the good Rulers are to manifeſt their likeneſs to God, would be *Purity*, and *abhorrence of Sin*.

Now, how can this *Purity* be manifeſt in God or his Rulers more clearly, than by executing *Judgments* upon Tranſgreſſors; by ordaining Arrows againſt ſuch *Perſecutors*, and preparing for them, accord-

according to their Merits, the *inſtruments of death* How can this be made known better, than by cauſing the dreadful effects of their wrath to come upon the *wilful children of Diſobedience.*

Should they be ſilent, and not manifeſt their *diſpleaſure* thus againſt *wickedneſs*, the *ſecure Sinners* would be ready to think that *they were altogether ſuch as themſelves*; but determining to take vengeance upon the *Ungodly*, they diſcover themſelves of purer eyes than, with approbation, *to behold Iniquity.*

3. The *third* thing that in reaſon Rulers are to diſcover their reſemblance to God in, is, *loving Righteouſneſs*, and this is beſt done by being reſolved to do the thing which is right, to give a *meet Recompence*, rendring what is due, and rewarding every man according to his works.

For *Juſtice* is not an idle, lazy, unactive *Vertue*, as if Rulers might ſatisfie themſelves with barren *notions*, and curious, but unfruitful *ſpeculations.* But ſhe is operative and practical, and where ſeated, is buſie not only in paſſing a *right Sentence*, but due *execution of Recompence*; and that not according to the *quality* of the Perſon, but the *merit* of the Work. Not only acquitting the *Innocent*, but condemning the *Guilty*; not only defending and rewarding the *Righteous*, but alſo puniſhing the *wilful Sinner*, and pouring out *wrath* and *tribulation* upon the *Unrighteous*, giving them that Recompenſe which is meet.

And therefore we ſee not only *Scepters*, and *Purſes*, and *Crowns*, as Emblems of the *Judges*

Honour, but alſo *Rods*, and *Swords*, and *Axes*, to ſignifie the deſign of their Office to be as well a *terrour and avenger of them that do Ill*, as a *Countenancer and rewarder of them that do Well.*

The *Sword* is not to be born in vain, but to manifeſt the Rulers intention to *Righteouſneſs.* He ought to diſcover it by his threatning and the determination of *Puniſhments* againſt wilful Offenders.

Fourthly, The religious Ruler is to ſhew himſelf like God in *exactneſs of Juſtice*, and to evidence himſelf *no reſpecter of Perſons*, and to do all things without *partiality.*

Righteouſneſs is beſt, when in a Land, like the *Sun* in the Firmament, it ſhineth with equal influence upon the *thatched Cottage*, as on the *Ivory Palace.*

Juſtice ſhews all the ſame, countenance, weighs all things with an equal balance. *Gold* and *Dirt*, *Pibbles* and *Diamonds*, according to their weight turn her Beam. *Diverſe weights and meaſures* ſhe accounts an *abomination.*

Gods *Deputies* are to incline to *exact Judgment*, and to ſhew themſelves ready to puniſh the *rich* and *mighty*, as ſoon as the *poor* and *contemptible.* And this is beſt done by Governours fixing and predetermining of *Puniſhments* upon the Offence, without reſpect to the *quality* or *relation* of the Offender.

Thus *Impartiality* and *Juſtice*, *Wiſdom* and *Purity*, theſe Divine graces, are beſt diſcovered in Gods *Deputies*, which, unqueſtionably, is the

moſt

moſt reaſonable thing in the World.

One thing remains yet to be proved, which is aſſerted in this Propoſition, *That threatning and determining of Puniſhments, by Rulers, upon ſuch wilful Tranſgreſſors, is according to the conſtant practice of the Church of God.*

And, if we conſult the prophane *Hiſtories* of all Ages and Nations, we ſhall find, never any People joyned in Society of any Religion, *true* or *falſe*, but had their determinations of *Puniſhments* upon thoſe that were openly *diſobedient*, upon thoſe who wilfully *neglected* and *contemned* ſuch Services and Duties enjoyned, that they judged expedient and neceſſary to procure the favour and bleſſing of that *Deity* which they agreed to adore. And this is ſo evident, as is confeſſed of all, and needs no further proof or illuſtration.

But if we will conſult *Sacred Writ*, which may content us, we cannot but obſerve, that GOD himſelf can rarely be found to have taken care of the Conduct of any perſons, or People, to direct them in the exerciſe of an *acceptable Religion*, but he fenced up their way with Thorns, to limit their *aberration*, and reſtrain them from *ſin*, with a Commination of *Penalties*.

Thus, that our Firſt Parents might fear to eat of the *forbidden Fruit*, he threatens them with *Death*, as a certain effect and conſequence of their *Diſobedience*.

Thus to *Cain*, *If thou doſt not well*, *Sin lies at the door*.

Thus, to move *Abraham* and his Seed to keep his Covenant of *Circumciſion*, God threatens,

Gen. 17. 14. *That the uncircumciſed Man-child, whoſe fleſh of his Fore-skin was uncircumciſed, that Soul ſhould be cut off from his People; for he hath broken my Covenant.*

Thus in that *Theocracy* over *Iſrael*, every where we read *Curſes* denounced upon *Diſobedience*; And by *Moſes*, and all the Prophets, he threatens *to viſit their ſins with Rods, and their offences with Scourges.* So Levit. 26. 14, &c. *If you will not hearken to me, and will not do all theſe Commandements. If you ſhall deſpiſe my Statutes, I will ſet my face againſt you for evil, &c. ſaith the LORD; And, if you will walk contrary unto me, and not hearken, I will bring ſeven times more Plagues upon you, according to your ſins.*

And certainly, it cannot be bad or unreaſonable for *Rulers* to uſe the ſame method in governing their Subjects, that *GOD* uſed in ruling his own People, *Iſrael*.

If we conſult the method *Chriſt* uſed to govern his Church in this laſt Diſpenſation, it is impoſſible but we muſt acknowledge, *That a coercive Power, by Commination of Judgments, to* reſtrain from evil, *and* quicken to good, *cannot be unlawful for the Chriſtian Magiſtrate, when it was practiced by* Chriſt *himſelf.*

John the Baptiſt, that Meſſenger ſent by Chriſt, *before his face to prepare his waies*, preſſeth upon his Auditors the Goſpel duty of *Repentance*, and this he inforceth from this reaſon, *becauſe the kingdom of Heaven was at hand.* Which is not to be underſtood of *Mercies* and *Priviledges* only, that were promiſed, that might attract and encourage them

them to *Goſpel Duties*; but of *Judgments* and *Puniſhments* threatned to be executed, which might inforce them to receive and obey the *Goſpel*. And there, *Matt.* 3. this Holy Preacher tells them, *The Axe was laid to the Roots of the Tree. Fire* and *Wrath* was coming upon the *unbelieving World*, which could not be eſcaped but by *Repentance*, and bringing forth fruits worthy of *Amendment of life*.

And *Chriſt* himſelf preacheth the ſame Doctrine, and urgeth the neceſſity of it from the ſame Motive; *For, except they Repented, they ſhould all likewiſe periſh.*

Andwhen Chriſt had cured the *Impotent man*, to make him every whit whole, and to reſtrain him from ſin, he affrights him with a Commination of a *worſe thing coming unto him.* And to quicken his Diſciples, to *work the works they were ſent about while it was day*, he minds them of a *night coming when no man ſhould work.*

Thus, to awaken his Country-men at *Jeruſalem*, to *know and conſider the time of their Viſitation*, and to *mind the things that concern their Peace*, he tells them of a time when *Peace ſhould be hid from their eyes*, and *their Houſes ſhould be left to them deſolate.*

And thus did the Apoſtles, in the Primitive times, who knew the mind, and had the Spirit of Chriſt; they threatned the *Impenitent* with a *day of wrath*, a *day of vengeance*, a *day of puniſhing thoſe with everlaſting deſtruction that knew not God, and obeyed not the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.*

So

So the Author to the *Hebrews*, to deter and terrifie thoſe Baptized perſons from *Separation*, and *forſaking holy Aſſembling*, not to decline mutual *exhortation* and *profeſſion of Faith*, he tells them of a *day of Judgment*, a *day of Vengeance* was ſuddenly approaching.

And this courſe was uſed by *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, in the Primitive times, at the planting of the *Goſpel*, by threatning of *Judgments* and *Vengeance* to drive their Followers to *Repentance*. Certainly, upon ſober conſideration, it cannot be lookt upon as unwarrantable, if pious Governours affright from evil thoſe Subjects that elſe would be *diſobedient*, with menacing and determining *Puniſhments* to be inflicted upon them.

Thoſe frivolous Objections we meet with againſt this Truth are not worth the mentioning, and, if throughly perpended, we may conclude them the iſſue of *heat* and *paſſion* of men bent to *Oppoſition*, and not the words of ſober Reaſon.

And what Spirit they are led with, let any ſober man judge, who reproach and defame the juſt determination of *emendatory Puniſhments* upon *Recuſancy*, and *wilful omiſſion* of neceſſary Duties (which is an open ſin) with the odious name of PERSECUTION; and are ready to blaſpheme the Rulers and Officers if they threaten theſe Penalties (much more if they execute them) as *Cruel*, *Tyrannous* and *Antichriſtian*.

I confeſs willingly, men that have not quite obliterated the Divine Image, have *bowels of Mercy*,

Mercy, are full of *Pity* and *Compaſſion*, and *Pugnat cum Natura hominis, Dolore quâ Dolor ſatiari*; for any man to be full of *Malice*, and to contrive with malicious intention to *torment* and endeavour to *deſtroy* his Neighbour, is unnatural and unchriſtian, it is a ſin.

But thus, unreaſonably and falſly, have they done what they can to blaſt the Repute of an harmleſs and neceſſary Duty with a bad Name, when *Puniſhments* are threatned by the pious Rulers, with the deſign of Peoples *amendment* and *ſafety*, not their *torment* or *deſtruction*.

No man intends his Beaſts ſhould run into the Ditch, or hedge of Thorns, wherewith he encompaſſeth his Grounds; but deſigns only they may feed ſafely within due Bounds. It is peeviſh and ill-natur'd for them to clamour of *Perſecution*, when their *Extravagances* are limited, and *ſafety* endeavoured. But ſo it is, ſome froward Tempers, when any waies conſtrained to be *vertuous*, and reſtrained from being *vicious*, will cry out they are *perſecuted* and *afflicted*.

And, if any *Affliction* or *Puniſhment* does follow the wilful Tranſgreſſion of theſe men, it is not the Magiſtrates deſigning or cauſing; but their own chuſing is juſtly blamed, who pull *Tribulation* upon themſelves by the errours of their own waies.

Again, when Rulers and Officers, by agreeing and fixing of *Puniſhments*, conſtrain men, through objected Inconveniences, to reflect upon the evil of their waies and return from them, and to come into the way of Truth, who otherwiſe would ſtill erre and be deceived; it is *Mercy* of the Ruler to

the

the Transgressour, who designs his *salvation*. The *Cruelty* (if any) is to the *Sin*, and its no fault to design its destruction.

Lastly, *Persecution* then is faulty and blameworthy when 'tis for *well-doing* only, when men are hated for *Rrghteousneſs sake*, without any cause; when men are industriously pursued, to be vexed and tormented for walking in waies of *holiness* and *righteousneſs*. This is *Persecution* indeed to be complained of and lamented.

But when *Punishments* are deliberately threatned, and inflicted upon open *Disobedience* and wilful *Recusancy*, these are Acts of *remunerative Justice*, a Nations prop and and glory, and deserve justly to be commended. It is injurious to account this a *Persecution* that deserves to be condemned.

They are therefore deservedly accounted *malicious* and *injurious*, who clamour against the just determination of *Punishments* by pious Rulers against open Transgressions, with censures of a *culpable Persecution*, which is, doing *Justice* and no *Injury*; is *Mercy* and no *Cruelty*; an evidence of the Rulers design of his Subjects *Conversion* and *Salvation*, not of *Vexation* and *Destruction*. Which if it doth happen upon the *obstinate Offender*, he pulls it upon himself by his own choice; it comes not from the *Rulers* intention or resolution.

Another Objection we hear frequently against the threatning and determination of *Punishments* by Christian Magistrates, it is openly complained, *That they force the Conscience of the Righteous, which ought to have its Liberty. Their Conscience*, they cry

cry it abroad, *ought to be left Free.*

But I appeal to any ſober perſon to judge, whether theſe Complaints of *Greivances* be not rather fancied and feigned, than poſſible to be feared or impoſed: But ſome there are that fear where no fear was.

To diſcourſe this Point, in reference to our preſent State, *Puniſhments*, threatned by our Governours Laws, for *wilful Recuſancy*, is, twelve pence for one Sunday, twenty pound for one Month, to be levied by *Diſtreſs*, a Force is threatned upon their *Purſe*, and they cry out a Force is offered to their *Conſcience*, which is impoſſible.

For when the Magiſtrates Sword and Power can reach only to *Goods*, or *Body*, or what is *external* (than this they can do no more) they can have no power of the concluſions of the Underſtanding, or reſolutions of the Will, or any thing *internal*, which we muſt underſtand by *Conſcience*.

And, ſuppoſe the Magiſtrate can have any power upon *Conſcience*, the operation he can have will prove but *Moral*, not *Phyſical*; to *incline* it, not to *force* it. Neither is this to be conceived feaſible by *Man*, which is hardly to be conceived to be done by *God* himſelf: For *Force* implies a thing to be done of thee, thou art meerly *paſſive* when Forced, and is ſcarcely to be imagined of voluntary Agents, who are *active*, and are ſaid to do what they do themſelves. *Quicquid fit de te, tu non facis*; Thy *Concluſion* or *Reſolution*, is thy own voluntary Act.

And as I ſaid before of the *Liberty*, ſo I ſay now of *Force*, It is inconſiſtent with, and cannot be

offered

offered to *Conſcience*. Thy *Conſcience* is freely thine own, and cannot be forced, and if Force be upon any thing it is upon *externals* only, it cannot be upon thy *Conſcience*.

Thou feareſt, and crieſt out of that which cannot be offered thee, namely, *Force of Conſcience*; and thou doteſt on and idolizeſt a *Chimæra*, NOTHING, what thou canſt never find, namely, *Liberty of Conſcience*.

Liberty of Conſcience thou contendeſt for, as thou ſaiſt. Conſider, thou haſt not fully expreſt thy mind and intendment; thou canſt not deſire or contend for what thou canſt not poſſibly have. There is ſomething elſe thou meaneſt and contendeſt for; and really, that thing is *liberty of Action*, *licentiouſneſs of Recuſancy*, that thou maiſt freely tranſgreſs the Preceptive Laws of *Piety* without *penalty*. And this thou painteſt and gildeſt over with a varniſh and pretence of *Conſcience*.

Now, what Rule haſt thou that directs thee *wilfully* to omit and refuſe the *Publick Exerciſes of Piety?* And if no certain *Rule*, thou canſt have no *ſound Conſcience*. Thou haſt a Rule that forbids *Recuſancy*, and it is a ſin; Wilt thou pretend a *Conſcience*, to continue in ſin? If thou haſt any Conſcience in what thou contendeſt for, it muſt be an *accuſing* or *condemning* one: And well it were if the Sword of the Magiſtrate could Force this *Conſcience* from thee.

I am ſure thou defireſt amiſs to have *Liberty* and *Freedom* to enjoy a *condemning Conſcience*. I have no patience to perſiſt any further Arguing; but I have ſo much charity, not to deſiſt from

praying

praying for you, that our Father would forgive you, *for you know not what you say.*

At last then, study to be quiet, you that *dissent* and *separate* from us, and seriously consider how your heat of *Opposition* and *Contention* hath transported you to the venting of such ridiculous Fancies, as certainly, if we do not abjure Reason, we must expect to see them suddenly hissed out of the Nation.

From the Premises then, we must conclude, That the threatning and determining of *Punishments* against *Recusancy*, is *Mercy* and *Compassion*, and ought not to be called *Cruelty* or *Persecution*. That they tend to the *informing* and not *inforcing* of Right *Consciences*. And that 'tis clearly evident, from *Reason*, and her Dictates; from the *Custome* of all Nations; from the practice of *GOD*, both before, and in the time of the Law; from the preaching of *Christ*, and his *Ministers*, in the time of the Gospel; they are not only *justifiable*, but *expedient* and necessary in the Church of GOD.

Propo-

Propoſition IV.

The inflicting of Puniſhments, as determined, is juſt and neceſſary for the ſafety and welfare of our Nation.

MAGISTRATES care and endeavour ought to be, *to promote the welfare of the People to whom they are related*; and, without queſtion, this is moſt likely to be compaſſed, by an *Impartial execution of an exact Righteouſneſs*. *RIGHTEOUSNESS* is not only the Girdle, Robe and Diadem of the Ruler; but the Stay, Crown and Glory of the whole Society.

Now

Now *Commutative Juſtice* in Contracts and Bargains (if men would not be partial to their own Intereſt, but diſpatch them with equity, without fraud to each others convenience) conduceth highly to the *content*, *comfort*, and *proſperity* of a People. Yet becauſe frequent *Contracts* are oft agreed of by Private perſons, for the moſt part ſecretly, and rarerly fall under the Magiſtrates cognizance; At this time *Commutative Juſtice* will come little under our preſent Conſideration. Our great reſpect in this Treatiſe muſt be to *diſtributive Juſtice*, which is of univerſal influence, and tendeth to *Publick peace* and *proſperity* of a Society. And it is the principal office and work of the juſt Magiſtrate, undoubtedly, to ſee this executed impartially.

Now, refined *Notions*, and empty *Speculations*, are not ſufficient for the diſcharge of the Rulers duty in diſtributive *Righteouſneſs*: But his buſineſs is done in his office by *practice* and *action*, and his care muſt be not only of paſſing a right Sentence, but of *impartial* execution of a meet Recompence, proportioned to the Merit of every mans work.

Not only, that they who obey honeſt Laws, and continue in *well-doing*, may have *Commands*, *Riches*, *Glory*, and *Honour* and *Rewards*, as encouragements to *Vertuous actions*; but alſo, that they who are wilfully diſobedient, may have *Indignation*, *Wrath*, *Tribulation*, *Anguiſh* and *Penalties* inflicted, as reſtraints and deterrments from *ſinful* and *Irregular attempts*.

And to ſee this latter done, is the Magiſtrates Province as much as the former, being ſent by God as much for the *puniſhment of evil doers*, as for the *praiſe of them that do well.*

REWARDS and *PUNISHMENTS* are like two Pillars or Walls, that ſupport and uphold the ſtately ſtructure of *Righteouſneſs*, under whoſe ſhadow and defence a People may abide and reſt comfortably, in peaceful Habitations. Take away one *Pillar* or *Wall*, and all is ſhuffled together, the whole building becomes uſeleſs, and is ruin'd immediately.

Let there be no fear of an *enſuing Puniſhment* to follow upon acts of *Wickedneſs* in our Nation, and there will be little love or care of *Righteouſneſs* in the midſt of us.

That *Puniſhment* ſhould be inflicted upon the Offender is natural and divine. God in the beginning did determine it, and ſurely what he determines is Juſt, in whom is no *unrighteouſneſs.*

And if the threatning and determining of Puniſhments be *Juſt*, then it muſt follow, the *inflicting* of them muſt be *Juſt* alſo, and will follow certainly, *For he that is righteous hateth lying, and he that loveth Truth, will faithfully perform what he hath deliberately promiſed; and what he hath ſpoken for his Honours ſake, will certainly bring it to paſs.*

To act like God cannot be injuſt; therefore *Gods Deputies* in judging any part of the World, as to determine puniſhments upon Offenders, ſo to inflict them when determined, muſt be *juſt* and *reaſonable* alſo.

Again;

Again, *Rulers* are to be like God, and their chief Duty, by his appointment that ſent them to the Office, both by the *Goſpel* as well as the *Law*, is to *execute vengeance upon wilful Tranſgreſſours*. The *Sword* was given them, not as an empty badge of Honour, for a ſhew, for faſhion, for ornament only, but for uſe, for employment, for terrour; *For he is the Miniſter of God, a Revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil*, Rom. 13.4.

The Private man that taketh the *Sword* raſhly, ſhall periſh by the Sword of the *Magiſtrate* juſtly; and *who ſheddeth mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed*. And it is a great part of wiſdom for an holy King, *to ſcatter the wicked, and to bring the Wheel over them*, Prov. 20.26.

And without any great pains, it may be proved to have been the will of God in all times, declared both before the Law of *Moſes*, under the *Law*, and under the *Goſpel*, that Capital *Puniſhments* (if the heynouſneſs of the Crime deſerved it) might be juſtly inflicted.

And if *Capital* and *Sanguinary puniſhments* can be proved lawful, becauſe in all Ages appointed and allowed by God; ſure *Emendatory puniſhments* cannot be denied but they may be inflicted, and their inflicting may eaſily be juſtified.

True indeed, we ought not to mock at *Calamity*, or rejoyce when an *Enemy* falleth. *Vengeance* ought not to be the Godly mans choice, which is not the delight of God himſelf; and 'tis not agreeable with the nature of Man, to delight himſelf with the grief, and to make himſelf pleaſure with the torment of his Neighbour.

Yet it is reaſonable and juſt the *Malefactour* ſhould be puniſhed, and that *tribulation and wrath ſhould come upon him that works unrighteouſneſs.* And certainly they have as little *Charity* as *Reaſon*, who blaſpheme him as malicious or miſchievous that accuſeth or puniſheth the *Rebellious* or *Injurious*.

1. *Puniſhments*, as to the Malefactors, prove but like bitter, unpleaſing potions, that work ſtrongly for ſucceeding health. And if *Capital*, their *Bodies* are deſtroyed that their *Souls* may be ſaved.

2. To put a period to the Malefactors wickedneſs;

Ut quo uno modo
Poſſunt deſinant eſſe mali. Sen.

That they who would not learn to be good, may at laſt be reſtrained and ceaſe to do evil.

3. That others may be affrighted. For,

Pœna ad unum, metus ad omnes.

That the whole Congregation may hear and fear, and that they may not dare to ſin ſo preſumptuouſly, or to commit any ſuch evil among them; *For when a Scorner is ſmitten, the ſimple will beware*, Prov. 19.25.

4. That the Righteous may be preſerved, which cannot be but by *Coertions* and *Reſtraints* upon the Wicked; keeping them in fear of *Puniſhment*. When, *Inter tot ſupplicia ſontium ſatis tuta Innocentia*, *Innocence* it ſelf is ſcarcely ſafe, and is never

never ſecure amidſt all the *Puniſhments*. And to ſuſpend *Penalties* is the ready way to make the *Rulers* undervalued and contemned; their *Laws* ſlighted and reproached; to cauſe the Offender to grow ſecure, impudent and not aſhamed; to make the heart of the Righteous *faint*, and the hands of the Wicked *ſtrengthned*.

Upon theſe and ſome other Reaſons, ſome dare not deny all *Penalties*, but would have them inflicted only for the breach of *Natural* and *Moral Laws*, but not at all for breach of *Poſitive* or *Humane*.

But I would have all *Diſſenters* in this point conſider that they may be informed, How *that cannot be unlawful, in probability, if done in the Government of Men, which was ſo oft done and practiced by God himſelf, in his dealings and actings, amidſt the Government of his Choſen people*.

And it may very eaſily be made appear, upon a little obſervation, *That where God hath moſt clearly manifeſted his Care to perſons or people, that there he required Obedience* (not only to commands of things or actions intrinſecally in their own nature good, but alſo to commands of things or actions that in themſelves were indifferent) *when once injoyned and publiſhed; in that he did not only take Vengeance on them that deſpiſed his Moral Precepts, but executed it moſt ſeverely on them that tranſgreſſed his Poſitive Commands*.

Thus he moſt ſeverely puniſhed our Firſt Parents for eating the *Forbidden fruit*; *Achan*, for touching the *unclean thing*; *Saul*, for ſparing *Agag*, and ſaving the *beſt* of the Prey; the *Prophet*

for *eating Bread* in the other Prophets houſe; *Lots* Wife, for *looking back*.

Certainly, upon good reaſon this was done; for when God will maintain his *Prerogative*, and be tender of his *Honour*, How could he hold him guiltleſs that would deſpiſe his Authority *Commanding?* ſuſpect his Goodneſs or Wiſdom, or both *Directing?* and, who frowardly as diſcontented with his *wiſe diſpoſal*, would betray his diſtruſt of the *ſufficiency of the Almighty*, and call in queſtion his *direction*; and wilfully ſhall gratifie their own *Humor* and *Fancy*, rather than dutifully ſubmit to the expreſs deſignation and appointment of the moſt *wiſe God*. For, *Obedientia in iis, quæ parva ſunt, exploratius probatur*; Diſobedience to thoſe *leaſt Commands* is the greateſt Diſobedience, when we dare rebel for a trifle.

And certainly, in ſubmitting to *Commands* that ſeem leaſt neceſſary, we give teſtimony of our greateſt obſervance, when we bring under our *Reaſon* to our *Faith*, in his wiſe *Directions*, and ſilence our diſputing with *ready Obeying*.

But when perſons ſhall obey God only in thoſe things they conceive *Reaſonable*, or think them *profitable*, only when the nature of the thing requireth it, or their own Intereſt or Advantage is concerned; Certainly, in ſuch *Obedience* it may ſafely be concluded, *That ſuch Perſons offend rather than do what is acceptable, when things are done with greater reſpect to pleaſe themſelves, rather than out of Reverence to pleaſe their God. And theſe Tranſgreſſions which have been ſo great Offences againſt God, muſt needs be alſo when againſt his Deputies,*

even

even the neglect and breach of Positive Laws; *and* Punishments *proportionably determined, are justly inflicted upon those that are thus unreasonably disobedient.*

By this means persons discover their distrust of the *Providence of God*; who, if any where, is to be found *standing in the Congregations of Princes, and sits and judgeth amongst the Gods: And, by whom Kings reign, by him Princes decree Justice.*

By this means the *Authority* of the Ruler is made vile and despicable, and his *Wisdom* undervalued, and *Directions* as contemptible.

By this means others are prompted by thy *Disobedience*, to harbour low conceits of their Governours, and to run with thee into the like disorder and miscarriage; and the issue must be, *unyieldingness, oppositon, confusion*, and *every evil work.*

And, by this means the *Morality* of the *fifth Commandement* is quite destroyed, when men can satisfie themselves with a formal (which is oft feigned) respect to the *Persons*, and have no regard to the *Commands* of their Governours.

When in truth, *Submission* to *Humane Ordinances*, as much as they are slighted, is the clearest evidence of thy *subjection* to *Higher Powers*; and thy *Disobedience* is no slight trifling *disobedience. That Punishment should be inflicted, as determined, upon such wilful Offenders, is just and reasonable, and undoubtedly according to the will of Christ.*

And now well I wot for these Positions, especially for this last (which I will hereafter in spight of opposition, more fully and more clearly maintain, if either desired, commanded, or provoked

to it) I must undoubtedly expect and prepare for it, That Troops of *Antinomians*, *Anabaptists*, *Presbyterians*, *Independants*, *Quakers*, all the *Libertines* and *Separatists*, will with open mouth come roaring upon me, and charge me as a person of a fiery, cruel, persecuting disposition, that hath nothing of the Gospel Temper, nor of the Spirit of Christ.

But if they would thus go on to reproach and rail on me, and lay things to my charge of which I am not guilty of, God he knows, by those Courses they will never be able to acquit or purge themselves.

For who doth not see, how *Ambition*, *Opposition*, or *Interest* hath byassed and perverted their Judgments (if they can be said to have any in these things they pretend) when having stoln into a *Name* and *Party* (as they falsly think) considerable; and willing to set up both, out of *ambition* in themselves, and *opposition* to Governours; they never boggle, without check or fear, at the transgressing the *wise* and *honest Laws* established, and *Rules* prescribed unto us, suggesting falsly, by their words and practices, that they are unlawful; and when by their *obstinacy* they have incurred the danger of the Censure of the *Laws*, and the *Penalties* affixed to them, then it must be their main concern under a colour of *Meekness* and falseterm'd *Moderation*, to strive for a lawless *Toleration*, that they may sin (when they cannot without *Guilt*) yet without *Punishment*.

And

And now, It is their great buſineſs openly to preach and declare, *That the execution of Penalties determined, ought to be ſuſpended, if not reſcinded*, and ſo endeavour to involve the whole Nation confuſedly to run into an Univerſal *Licentiouſneſs*, upon hope of *Impunity*. Things they can never believe fit to be granted, whatever they ſay.

For if the *Power* and the *Sword* were put into their hands, when no Nation can be preſerved, nor *Juſtice* executed, without inflicting *Puniſhments* upon wilful Tranſgreſſours; it is not to be imagined but they would quickly give a divorce to theſe *wild Principles* they ſeem to eſpouſe and maintain; *Puniſhments* would quickly be determined, and readily executed by them on *Diſſenters* and *Diſobedient*; and no doubt of it, we ſhould feel by too ſenſible experience, what we have formerly known, *That they would be more cruel and bloody, than any that can be juſtly charged upon our Governours to be ſo.*

And ſay what they can, it is evident it is not a *Toleration* but *Maſtery* that theſe men aim at; for had they power, I dare ſay, their fiery zeal would again be diſcovered to advance the Intereſt of their *Sect* and *Opinion*, and ſo ſevere would their *Determinations* be, and execution of *Penalties* upon *Diſſenters*, as no man diſſenting ſhould find *Impunity:* Which, God forbid.

But now let us examine their Objections againſt our laſt mentioned Poſitions, and ſeriouſly obſerve their ſtrength and reaſonableneſs, if any to be found in them.

And

And they object thus unanimously, *That Bodily, or External Puniſhments, cannot be ſhewn to have been ordered, to be determined and inflicted by any Rules of the Goſpel, nor proved that ever they were determined or executed by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, eſpecially not upon Omiſſion, or difference of any in the open profeſſion of Faith, or publick exerciſe of Religion.*

And without hæſitancy, with as much earneſtneſs, but with more truth and reaſon, we utterly deny all theſe things, and doubt not but to any ſober Reaſon, we ſhall aſſert and prove the direct contrary.

It is confeſſed by all, and not denied by any that I have met with, That, before the laſt diſpenſation, *Bodily* and *External Puniſhments* might lawfully be agreed upon and inflicted, and ſo they were in every Polity and Government: that *Sin* might be reſtrained, and *Righteouſneſs* executed, to preſerve *Peace*, and promote the welfare of the Society.

Before *Chriſts* Incarnation, this is owned to have been natural and univerſal, and according to the different heinouſneſs of Offenders Crimes, and their noxious influence; ſo by wiſe Governours there hath been ordered variety and difference of *Puniſhments*. The higheſt whereof have been *Capital*, *mortal*, deſtructory of the *Body* and *Life*, which is all the Ruler can reach unto. And that thoſe have been lawfully inflicted before the *Law*, and in the *Law*, is acknowledged by our Adverſaries themſelves.

Now,

Now, if our Oppoſers cannot ſhew where this was repealed in the *Goſpel*, I am ſure I can ſhew where it was eſtabliſhed; For Chriſt came not to *diſſolve, or deſtroy the Law of Nature, but confirm and fulfil it*, and it muſt continue in Polities, as lawful in the times of the *Goſpel*, as it was before, and in the time of the *Law*. And this Inference muſt follow, *If Capital, and deſtructory Puniſhments may, certainly, thoſe that are Emendatory may be determined and inflicted by Governours, from the Rules of the Goſpel.*

Now, that the open and obſtinate may periſh by the *Sword* of the Higher Powers, *who beareth it not in vain*, is ſo plain from Chriſts own words and the Apoſtles Letters, as it were miſpending of time to inſiſt in a further proof or demonſtration.

Therefore, ſome of our Adverſaries are ſo modeſt, as to confeſs the *Goſpel* doth permit *Capital Puniſhments* to be inflicted by Magiſtrates, upon contumacious perſons, diſturbing publick *Charity* and *Peace*; but for things or actions that concern *Piety* or *Religion*, either for *Omiſſion* or *Tranſgreſſion*, the Goſpel gives the Offender an *Impunity* and *Indempnity*, ſay our Oppoſers in this particular; but with what truth or reaſon let any man judge.

But yet it is confidently aſſerted, *That Hereſie, or any erronious Opinion (which man can give a Reputation unto with a ſpecious name of* CONSCIENCE, *when it can be nothing leſs) ought not to be puniſhed.*

If

If by *Hereſie* they mean, a ſecret though reſolute electing or adhering to ſome *Opinion* or *Perſwaſion*, contrary to ſome fundamental Article of *Faith*, or ſome duty of *Religion*, if they keep it ſecret, that no man hath cognizance of it, the Magiſtrate can neither judge it, nor puniſh it, for his Power reacheth only to *external* and manifeſt things.

But *open publication* of this, defaming the *Goſpel*, or any one Article of *Faith*, accompanied with an endeavour to gain *Proſelytes* to his Erroneous Perſwaſion, this may be juſtly *cenſured* or *puniſhed*.

Declared Hereſie, and *open Schiſms*, are of dreadful conſequence to diſturb the Peace of the whole Society.

St. *Paul* wiſhed, and not unlawful, if the Magiſtrate endeavour, *they may be cut off that trouble it.* For ſuch not only diſturb the Society in point of *Piety*, but in point of *Charity* and *Peace*, while they cauſe difference of pretended *Judgment*, *Faith*, *Conſciences*; upon which there muſt follow *alienation* of *Affections*, and *Contentions*, as hath been declared before ſufficiently.

Now, if thoſe ſins that abuſe our *Piety* to God have as bad or worſe influences, for unhappy conſequences, as the ſins that abuſe *Charity* to our Neighbours; why they ſhould have leſſer, or no *puniſhment*, it is beyond my narrow Reaſon to diſcover.

This

This then I positively affirm, and will not doubt to maintain, *That Hereſie* or *Schiſme*, *when open and declared, and diſturbs the Peace of the Society, or any other manifeſt ſin, ought to have Puniſhments determined and inflicted by Magiſtrates, by the Rules of the Goſpel.* And I hope it will be granted, what was ordered by thoſe Rules, may lawfully be ordered by the Laws of Rulers to the end of the World.

It is yet inſiſted on, *Theſe things were not done by Chriſt or his Apoſtles. That Chriſt threatned woes and deſtruction to the unbelieving Jews is unqueſtionably evident; and that as he threatned them, ſo upon their impenitence he inflicted them.*

True indeed, all the time of Chriſts Miniſtery and Humiliation, he did not manifeſt his Regal power, by *inflicting* Puniſhments, but only by *threatning* them upon ſuppoſed *Diſobedience.* But when Aſcended, taking upon him to be *Judge* and *King*, he puniſhed the *Rebellious*; and the Judgments and ruine of the *Jews* muſt be acknowledged to have come by the avenging Power of *Chriſt.*

As he threatned, ſo he cauſed the root of the Tree to wither for its unfruitfulneſs. For not returning *Fruit* when demanded of his *Vineyard*, he pulled down the Wall thereof, and it was trodden down. For killing the *Heir*, he miſerably deſtroyed the *Husbandmen.* Becauſe *Jeruſalem* would not be gathered together under the *Obedience* of the *Goſpel*, he cauſed their Houſe to be left unto them deſolate.

And

And ſure it cannot be ſuppoſed unlawful, if it be done by Chriſtian Rulers upon *open* and *obſtinate Tranſgreſſors*, which was evidently done by Chriſt himſelf.

And for the *Apoſtles*, Though they were not Kings, yet they had Authority to cenſure and puniſh thoſe that were *obſtinately diſobedient*; and they did exerciſe their Power wherewith they were intruſted to this end, when their *Excommunication* was oft attended with *Temporal Penalties*, to the deſtruction of the fleſh ſometimes, that the *Soul* might be ſaved.

And who dare ſay, It is unjuſt for Rulers, appointed by God, to do the like things, for the ſame Reaſons and End, which the extraordinary Spirit of Chriſt, given to the Apoſtles, effected.

One thing yet remains to prove, *viz.* That this was done upon *Omiſſion* or *Recuſancy* of *Obedience* to the Goſpel. And queſtionleſs ſo it was; for Chriſt (becauſe the *Jews* would not know the time of his Viſitation in mercy) viſits them with *Judgments*. They rejected him and his Counſel, would not receive the *Goſpel*, and therefore he ordered and brought deſtruction upon them.

And thus was it done by the Apoſtles alſo, who for *open ſins* and *diſobedience* to Goſpel Rules, came not alway with ſpirits of *Meekneſs*, but ſometimes with a *Rod*. The *obſtinate Offender* was ordered to be Corrected that he might be aſhamed; ſometimes he was taken away from the Society of the *Faithful*, and delivered to Satan for the *deſtruction of the Fleſh*.

And

And, why ſhould it ſeem unjuſt for our Magiſtrates to order the like things, when by the Rules of the Goſpel, by the practice of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, *Puniſhments* may be determined and inflicted for *wilful Omiſſion* of Goſpel Duties, and manifeſt *Diſobedience*.

And if any may, ſure I am Ours be, that are ordered and determined with ſo much tenderneſs and moderation, as all the World muſt acknowledge our Rulers deſigns are to amend their Subjects and not deſtroy them. They ſhew themſelves good Phyſicians, they love not many *Funerals*. They had rather heal the diſtempered Member, than cut it off. They proceed ſlowly and rarely to mortal *Puniſhments*, only when the heinouſneſs of the Crimes exact them, and, if tolerated, would endanger the Peace of a great part of the Society. So that undoubtedly, the Clamours of *Oppreſſion* and *Perſecution*, when penal Statutes againſt *Recuſants* are executed, as determined, can never be defended or excuſed.

When that peaceable and quiet ſtate of the Church in the laſt Times, ſo oft commended, and promiſed, and deſired by us, was promiſed upon a condition of a *Goſpel Obedience*, and cannot in reaſon be expected upon Profeſſors *wilful Recuſancy*, and *open Diſobedience*. Upon which, if any thing happens that is over-grievous and vexatious to the Tranſgreſſor, let him blame himſelf, and not his Rulers; When, *ſua voluntate obligat ſe ad pœnam*.

For

For when Laws are agreed upon ſoberly and deliberately; when publiſhed openly as moſt convenient; when conſented unto by declared *Vows* and *Subſcriptions*, and when *Puniſhments* are fixed upon ſuppoſed Tranſgreſſion; the *puniſhment* happens by the *Recuſants* own election, for no man chooſeth ſuch a *Tranſgreſſion*, but chooſeth ſuch a *Puniſhment*. He had warning, knew the danger, and would run into it; His blood be upon his own head.

Thus far we have reaſon, I hope, to conclude, *That Puniſhments are juſtly inflicted as determined*; It follows now we proceed to prove, *That it is neceſſary to inflict Puniſhments, for the ſafety and welfare of our Nation.*

Magiſtrates

MAGISTRATES, whoſe Offices are to their utmoſt, to advance the Publick good of the Community in which they are intereſſed, can no way more effectually diſcharge their Duties, than by taking care of an impartial execution of *diſtributive Righteouſneſs*, rendring to every man the Recompence that is meet, according to the Merit of his work. And one eſſential part of this *diſtributive Righteouſneſs*, is, *the juſt inflicting of Puniſhments upon thoſe obſtinate Offenders, who openly continue in evil doing.* In our preſent State this is neceſſary for the welfare of this Society in which we live.

That which evidently conduceth to the *order* and *peace* of our whole Nation, and without which all Orders of men are *diſturbed* and *injured*, muſt be granted to be neceſſary.

But without the juſt inflicting of Puniſhment as determined, all Orders of Men are diſturbed and injured. Ergo.

And, *That the omiſſion or neglect of a juſt inflicting of Penalties, as determined, hath an hurtful influence upon all Orders of Men* (if we do not unreaſonably deny our *ſenſes* and *experience*) we ſhall prove immediately.

1. With all ſubmiſſion we ſhall preſume to conſider, *That an execution of Vindicative Righteouſneſs makes the Rulers honourable, and without this, their Perſons become deſpicable, and their Authority contemptible.*

Vindicative Righteouſneſs is the glory of a Ruler, it begets an awful *reverence* and *fear* toward him from all his Subjects. The conſpicuity of this makes a man *more excellent than his Neighbour.* This made every ear that heard *Job* to bleſs him, and every eye to bear witneſs unto him, and every knee to bow to him, *becauſe he broke the Jaws of the wicked, and plucked the Prey out of his Teeth.*

Without this *Executing Vengeance*, when Rulers are cool and indifferent, and connive at *open ſins*, it muſt create a *ſuſpicion* in others, that they are ready to countenance them; Men can hardly forbear to entertain *low* and *diſhonourable* thoughts of that Governour, when they ſee he takes no *Vengeance* upon the *open Tranſgreſſor.* They are ready to think, He is unworthily accounted above his Fellows, who ſhews not his love to *Righteouſneſs* by his *open hatred* to *Wickedneſs.*

Without this activity of the Ruler, he hath, for the moſt part among his People, the ſame fate the great *Logg* had that fell into the Lake among the *Frogs*; at its firſt fall they trembled and hid themſelves, but at length obſerving it *ſtupid* and *inanimate*, they crept up upon the top of it, and *inſultingly* croaked over it. Like a *Scarr-Crow*, at whoſe firſt ſight *hurtful Fowls* flock about and wonder at it, but perceiving it *dead* and *unactive*, then *Terrour* vaniſhes, and they impudently ſit upon the top of it, and defile it.

Thus *punitive Righteouſneſs* exalts and renders *Honourable*, but *Indulgence* and *Impunity* of ſins are

are *Reproaches* to the Rulers of any People.

Again, I humbly propound it to Honourable Rulers conſideration, That their *Indulgence* to any open ſin entitles them to the *guilt* of the ſame ſin; *They have fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, that do not reprove them.*

Poor Old *Ely* (good enough in other things for ought we read) by his *Indulgence* to his Sons ſins, contracts that *guilt* that he dreadfully ſuffered, for GOD, by his Prophet told him, *That he had deſpiſed him, and ſet his Sons above him*, 1 Sam. 2. 29, 30. and by *Samuel* he is expreſsly told his *Iniquity* which he muſt know, viz. *His Sons had made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not.*

And, let this be ſeriouſly thought of, That he who *acts a ſin* may be catched ſuddenly in a ſurprizal, through the prevalence of a *Temptation*; but, he that *deliberately conſents to anothers acting*, can hardly find a tolerable *Excuſe*. *He is inexcuſable, who knowing the judgment of God (that they who commit ſuch things as are worthy of death) not only do the ſame, but take pleaſure in them that do them. Faciens & Conſentiens eâdem lege tenentur: Qui tolerat aliena peccata cum tollere poteſt facit ſua.* Religious Magiſtrates ought to take heed, that they do not make Rebellious mens ſins theirs, by *Connivance* or *Indulgence*, who have too many to anſwer for of their own.

Again, as *Indulgence* in Rulers makes them guilty of *ſin*, ſo it makes them liable to the *Judgment of GOD.*

This is plain in good Old *Ely*'s caſe, his *gentleneſs* and *lenity* to his Sons proved *cruelty* to himſelf, and made him the ſad object of the Anger of God; For God is known and honoured when *Judgment* is executed. And, *they that honour him* in this, *ſhall be honoured*; *and whoſo deſpiſe* this *ſhall be lightly eſteemed.*

And, what Ruler that is guilty of this ſin, in *ſparing* whom God would have puniſhed, but muſt tremble when he reads the Sentence of the Lord by his Prophet to *Ahab*, when he ſpared *Benhadad?* 1 Kings 20. 42. *Becauſe thou haſt let go a man out of thy hand, whom I appointed to utter deſtruction*; *therefore thy life ſhall go for his life*, *and thy People for his People.*

I truly honour, but dare not flatter thoſe Rulers God hath ſet over us; and therefore I preſume to put this into their remembrance, that *toleration* and *ſuſpenſion of Penalties* may be feared, and hereafter avoided by them; becauſe it is *a diſhonourable ſin*, *and dangerous for them not to inflict Puniſhments*, *as determined upon Recuſancy and wilful Diſobedience.* He muſt remove the *wicked* from him, and ſcatter all *evil* with his Eye, that would have his Throne eſtabliſhed by *Righteouſneſs.*

2. As inflicting *Puniſhments* is neceſſary for the Governours, ſo for all their Subjects, for the *Tranſgreſſors* ſake, how grievous ſoever it may ſeem to him, yet it works for good. For if the *Puniſhment* be deſtructory it can but be of the *Body* only, and before that comes, *time* and *helps* are afforded, for working that *Repentance* which may be accepted,

ſo

ſo as the *Soul* we hope, by this means, may be ſaved.

But moſt of our *Puniſhments* are *caſtigatory*, for amendment; and when (do we think) will the ſinner be *amended*, if never *corrected*. He will hardly be drawn off from his accuſtomed Iniquity, that ſees he can act it with *Impunity*. Becauſe *Judgment* is not executed, his heart is freely ſet upon his wickedneſs. But,

Malo ſuo dedoceatur malus delinquere. Sen.

He is mad if he dotes and runs to that wickedneſs which he ſees hated and abominated, and will certainly be puniſhed. When he is ſharply reproved, he will be aſhamed.

There is a *Cruel mercy* ſometimes in God and his Deputies which is to be feared, when they are reſolved not to diſcover their *Anger* againſt Offenders; when they ſeem to be contented with their *Deluſions*, and ſuffer them to ſleep on, vainly and ſecurely, to their *final deſtruction*.

And there is a diſcovery of *Anger* from both, which ought to be loved; when they hedge up the *Tranſgreſſors* way with Thorns; when by pains they awaken them out of their *Lethargy*, and will not ſuffer them to ſleep the *ſleep of death*.

Thus, when *Indulgence* and *Impunity* contribute to the ſinners deſtruction; *executing of Judgments* muſt be judged neceſſary, when they muſt conduce to the Tranſgreſſors *amendment* and *ſalvation*.

3. *Executing of Judgments* is neceſſary for the

Righteous mans ſake, without which he muſt be diſcouraged, he muſt be offended and troubled. *When Wickedneſs triumphs and bears ſway, the righteous are ſad; but when Righteouſneſs rules, the godly rejoyce. Impunity* to the Sinner, is, a *ſcandal*, a *ſtumbling-block* to the Righteous. When it goes well with the *Wicked*, and *they come in no misfortune like other men*, the *Holy man* is prompted to think it is in vain he hath ſerved God, or made choice of any of his Waies. If there be any love in Rulers to the flouriſhing of *Righteouſneſs*, they cannot give way to the indempnifying of *Wickedneſs*.

4. *Inflicting of Puniſhments* on the Tranſgreſſors, helps on the *Amendment* of the whole Society. They will hear and fear, and will not dare to commit ſuch *evil* as will torment them. *When Judgments are executed, the Inhabitants of the earth will learn Righteouſneſs. But, becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the heart of the Sons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil.* Care therefore is neceſſary in Rulers to puniſh *open wickedneſs*, if they deſire about them an *Holy people*, and a Nation of *Righteouſneſs*.

5. This is neceſſary to give a *Reputation* to our Laws, that they are juſtly and deliberately eſtabliſhed, and have *Penalties* ſo affixed upon ſuppoſed *Diſobedience*. Our lives would be confuſed and uncomfortable without *Laws*, and Laws are vain and unprofitable without *Execution*. By this *ſuſpenſion* we give ground to others to ſuſpect, that we our ſelves doubt and fear that our *Laws* determined are *needleſs* if not *unlawful*. But if they be

be *unjuſt* and *needleſs*, in Gods Name let them be repealed and abrogated; but if they be *juſt* and *neceſſary*, let us give them their deſerved honour by a due *Execution*.

6. This is neceſſary for the *ſafety* and *welfare* of the whole Nation. For if the *Wicked* be acquitted and goes *unpuniſhed*, it is an *abomination unto the Lord*: And, in any Nation, the not inflicting *Judgments* on *ſinners*, haſtens the coming of the Judgments of God. *There was not a man that executed Judgment in Jeruſalem, &c.* Jer. 5. and God juſtifies the equity of his proceeding to Judgment againſt that City, by that expoſtulation, *Shall I not viſit for theſe things ſaith the Lord, and ſhall not my Soul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* If the *faithful City* becomes an *Harlot*; if ſhe that was full of *Judgment*, and had once *Righteouſneſs* lodged in her, ſhall pervert or neglect *Judgment*, Vengeance will come upon her from God, though with a ſigh; *Ah, I will eaſe me of mine Enemies, and avenge my ſelf upon ſuch Adverſaries, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the holy and mighty One of Iſrael*, Iſai. 1. 24.

But the *Magiſtrates anger* for Sins, turns away *Gods Anger* from a Nation; and the executing of Judgment by *Man*, diverts the Judgment of *God*. *Phineas* ſtood up and executed Judgment, and the *Plague* was ſtayed. *Executing* of *Righteouſneſs* not only appeaſeth God, but procures his favour and bleſſings upon a People. It makes God delight to dwell amongſt them; for *JUSTICE* and *JUDGMENT* are the habitation of his Throne. It not only ſpeaks the *Beauty* but the ſound *Conſtitution*

ſtitution of that Government. Where *Mercy* and *Truth* meet together, *Righteouſneſs* and *Peace* kiſs each other. *Happy are the People that are in ſuch a caſe; for the Lord will ſhew them what is good, and their Land ſhall yeild her increaſe.*

If then the honour and preſervation of our *Rulers* be precious unto us; If we be deſirous of the *Tranſgreſſors* Converſion and Salvation; If we would not diſcourage and offend the *Righteous*; If we would not put a diſreputation upon our *Laws*, to render them contemptible, Then our care muſt be, *that Puniſhments be inflicted upon open and wilful Tranſgreſſors, as determined; for this* (as you have heard it proved) *is not only juſt but neceſſary, for the ſafety and welfare of our whole Nation.*

Thus far, my Dear Country-men, I have communicated openly, and preſented to your entertainment my ſerious Thoughts and Reaſons upon four Propoſitions, ſo eaſily juſtifiable, as although I cannot hope but I ſhall have many *Oppoſers* and *Gain-ſayers*, yet I confeſs, I do not fear any *Confuters.*

What I have publiſhed did not proceed out of *Oppoſition*, from the heat of an *inraged Paſſion* to carry me to any ſharp reflections on particular Perſons; but are conſiderately come abroad in the ſimplicity of my ſpirit, out of an unfeigned deſire of *Truth* and *Peace*, which I heartily deſire may at laſt prevail and triumph in the midſt of us. The direct way to this end, is, *to receive theſe things with the ſame ſpirit that they are written.*

I

I verily believe', *Prejudice* will keep off many from reading or conſidering theſe Truths, aſſerted and proved in this Treatiſe, becauſe they utterly deſtroy that *wild Liberty* and *Indulgence* which this Licentious Age ſo much affects.

Some few of that Temper will read them, but diſreliſh them, and I think (what many do) very few will be reclaimed by them. But yet I comfort my ſelf, that my labour will not be in vain, if ſome of our wel-wiſhing Friends, of more *moderate Tempers*, will deign the favour of a look upon theſe weak Endeavours. If they be not *informed*, yet they will be more fully *confirmed*, in the practice of thoſe Duties that are required at all our hands, when moſt agreeable to the *Law* of *Nature*, and the *Rules* of the *Goſpel*.

But to our Reaſoning and Arguing, we muſt call in the *Magiſtrates Sword* to aſſiſt; all without this will be little effectual, to reduce that *general Uniformity* deſired, which will prove the beauty and glory both of this *Church* and *Nation*.

To you therefore I am conſtrained in this neceſſity, for our full Releif, to make my humble Addreſs, that are our *RULERS*, and in Authority, appointed by God for our good. It is evident your Concern by your Offices, is, to carry on this great deſign, and are not barely to have reſpect to the *Notion*, but to the *Execution of Righteouſneſs*; and ſo you are not only to animadvert ſeverely upon *Tranſgreſſors*, of *moral*, *natural*, *neceſſary* and *divine Laws*; but upon thoſe that break the *poſitive*, *particular*, *human Ordinances*, that you have in

in Your Wiſdom *deliberately* and *juſtly* eſtabliſhed among us.

If perſons were ſo well diſpoſed, as *Counſels* or *Monitions* might perſwade all to be good, from the *Pulpit* or in the *Cloſet*, then no need to urge any Rigour from either *Bench* or *Barr*; but our unhappy Neceſſities require this at Your hands, who are Miniſters of *Remunerative Juſtice*, to ſhew your ſelves as well a *Terrour to them that do evil*, as a *Countenance to them that do well.*

You ſee what a lamentable ſucceſs your *Lenity* hath had hitherto, it muſt be *Severity* muſt do your buſineſs. Your method of leading this People, muſt be now like God leading his *Iſrael* from *Ægypt* to *Canaan:* the Conduct muſt not be only as in the day, *to lead them by a Clond*; but in this night it muſt be, *by a Pillar of Fire.* The eyes of theſe People have too long been daubed up with *Hony*, they muſt at laſt be opened with *Gall*: better to ſuffer ſome ſmart and Cure them, than ſuffer them, through *blindneſs*, to run headlong into the pit.

Breath then at laſt, freſh life into the languiſhing *Laws* of a fainting Kingdom, by an *impartial Execution. Offer unto God the ſacrifice of Righteouſneſs*, and take all care that *Juſtice* and *Judgment* may be executed in the midſt of us. Remember, *Lenity* and *Indulgence* are Encouragements to the *Tranſgreſſour*; and *Cruelty* and *Grievances* to the *Innocent.*

If you conceal and ſmother *Diſorder*; if you wink at *Wickedneſs*, and countenance *Diſobedience*;

Oh,

Oh, ſad Conſequences! both your *ſelves* and your *wholſome Laws* are diſhonoured and ſlighted. You are injurious to the *Offender*, while his heart is hardned, becauſe for his ſin he is not corrected: You offend the *Righteous*, when he is ſcandalized: You hurt your *weak Neighbour*, for he is ſtagger'd if not perverted: You hurt your own *Souls*, for you are perjured; yea, You are injurious to *GOD*, by Indulgence to *Recuſancy*; for his Worſhip is undervalued and contemned. For your *own*, for the *Laws*, for the *Offenders*, for the *Righteous*, for your *weak Neighbour*, for *Religion*, for *Gods ſake*, let there be no more halting, no longer connivance be found in the midſt of us. Execute true Judgment without *partiality*, and if we cannot have that *Obedience* to the Laws, which is juſtly required, let the Offender feel that juſt *Vengeance* which is threatned.

Then, and not till then, we may hope to ſee the two ſtanding Ordinances, *MAGISTRACY* and *MINISTERY*, will be reverenced and reſpected, which as yet are but mocked at and deſpiſed. Then we may hope, the Laws about the *publick Exerciſe of Religion* will find obligation and obſervance, which as yet are let looſe and weakned, and from too many meet with *ſcorn* and *contempt*. Then we ſhall once again ſee the *Faith* of the *Goſpel* openly profeſſed by every Believer, which now is concealed in moſt Congregations, as if men had cauſe thereof to be aſhamed. Then, and not till then, will the Church of *England* recover her attractive *comlineſs* and *beauty*, which

is

is now much defaced and loathed. Then *Uniformity*, the Glory of a Believing Nation, which hath been too long baniſht, will be brought back with joy into every Congregation. Then there will be no more running into Corners, but the Tribes of our *Iſrael* will unanimouſly go up to the *Houſe of their God, unto their Teſtimony, to give thanks unto the Name of the LORD.* Then ſhall God be glorified in all the Aſſemblies of his *Saints*, by *open Confeſſion*, which he knows is my earneſt endeavour and deſign, in my conſtant prayer in the Name of the Lord JESUS. *To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be glory and honour, now and for ever*, Amen.

A Catalogue of ſome Books, Printed for, and Sold by *H. Brome*, ſince the dreadful Fire of *London*, to 1675.

Divinity.

MR. Farindon's 130 *excellent Sermons*, *in* 3 Vol. *in* fol. *Price* 2 l. 5 s.

A large Concordance, by S.N. *to the Bible*, fol. 16 s.

51 *Sermons in* fol. *by Dr.* Franck, 15 s.

Dr. Heylin *on the Creed*, fol. 15 s.

A Guide to the Humble, by Tho. Elborow, *B.D. in* octavo. 2 s.

A Guide to Eternity, by John Bona, octavo, 2 s.

A Guide to Heaven, with, A Rule of Life, 10 d.

A Companion to the Temple, or, A help to publick Devotion, by Tho. Cumber, *in* octavo. 4 s.

Holy Anthems of the Church, 2 s. 6 d.

A Looking-glaſs for Loyalty, 2 s.

Biſhop Wilkins *Principles and Duties of Natural Religion, in* octavo, 5 s.

Biſhop Lanyes *Sermon at Court againſt Comprehenſion.* 6 d.

× Pearson B.p

Sermons.

Dean W. Lloyd's *Sermon before the King about Miracles.* 6 d.

——*his Sermon at the Funeral of* John L. *Bishop of* Chester, 6 d.

——*his Sermon before the King, in* Lent 1673, 6 d.

M. Naylor's *Commemoration Sermon for Col.* Cavendish, 6 d.

Mr. Sayers *Sermon at the Assizes at* Reading, 6 d.

Mr. Tho. Tanner's *Sermon to the scattered Members of the Church,* 6 d.

Mr. Stanhopp's *four Sermons on several Occasions,* octavo *bound,* 1 s. 6 d.

Dr. Du Moulin's *Papal Tyranny, as it was exercised over* England *for some Ages, with two Sermons on the fifth of* Novemb. *in* quarto, 1 s. 6 d.

——*his Sermon at the Funeral of Dr.* Turner, *Dean of* Cant. 6 d.

Histories.

The Life of the Duke Espernon, *the great Favourite of* France, *from* 1598. *where* D' Avila *leaves off, to our Times, by* Charles Cotton, *Esq; in* fol. *price* 18 s.

The History of the Ottoman *Empire, with Cuts, by* P. Ricaut, *Esq; in* octavo, 6 s.

Bishop Wilkins *Real Character, in* fol.

Bishop Colin, De Transubstantiatione, octavo. 2 s.

The same in English. 2 s. 6 d.

The Commentaries of M. Blaiz de Montluck, *the great Favourite of* France, *in which are contained all the Sieges, Battles, Skirmishes, for three Kings Reigns, by* Charles Cotton *Esq; in* fol. 14 s.

The

The Fair one of Tunis, *a new piece of Gallantry, by* C. Cotton *Esq; in* octavo, 2 s. 6 d.

The History of the Savarites, *a Nation inhabiting part of the third Continent, called* Terræ Australes incognitæ, 1 s.

Erasmus *Coll. in English*, octavo, 5 s.

Poems.

Elvira, *a Comedy by the Earl of* Bristol, 1 s.

M. A. Bromes *S. and Poems*, octavo, 3 s. 6 d.

——*his, with other Gentlemens Translation of* Horace, *in* octavo, 4 s.

Virgil's Travesty, *by* Ch. Cotton *Esq;* 1 s. 6 d.

Lucian's *Dialogues, Burlesque*, 2 s. 6 d.

Horace, *with a Song at every Act, by* C. C. *Esq;* 1 s.

Mr. Cowly's *Satyr against Separatists.*

Physick.

Dr. Barbettes *and Dr.* Deckers *excellent Practice of Physick, and Observation.* 2 s. 6 d.

Sir K. Digby, *his excellent Receipts in Physick and Chyrurgery, and of Drinks and Cookery.* 3 s. 6 d.

The Anatomy of the Elder Tree. 1 s. 6 d.

Miscellanies.

Dr. Glisson, De vita Naturæ, quarto 8 s.

Lord Bacons *Advancement of Learning.*

The Planters Manual, very useful for such as are curious in Planting and Grafting, by C. Cotton *Esq;*

The Compleat Gamester, 2 s.

Dr. Skinner's *Lexicon, in* fol. 1 l. 5 s.

14 *Controversial Letters, in* quarto 4 s. 6 d.

The Vindication of the Clergy, 1 s. 6 d.

Toleration discussed, by R. L'Estrange *Esq;* 2 s. 6 d.

A Treatise of Human Reason, in twelves, 8 d.

Essays

Essays of Love and Marriage, being Letters dissuading from Love, and answered; with some Characters and other Passages of Wit, in twelves, 1 s. 6 d.

School-Books.

Nolens Volens, *or you shall make Latin* 2 s. 6 d.
Centum Fabulæ, *in* octavo 1 s.
Artis Oratoriæ, *in* duodec. 2 s.

Law.

*The L.*Cook's *Institutes, in* 4 Vol. fol. 2 *l.* 5 s.
Sir James Dyer's *Reports*, fol. 18 s.
The Clerks Guide, in 4 *parts, and the first part alone.*
The exact Constable.

Controversies.

The seasonable discourse against Popery, *in* 4°. 6 d.
——*the Defence of it*, quarto 6 d.
——*the Difference betwixt the Church and Court of* Rome, *in* quarto 6 d.
The Papists Apology to the Parliament answered, 6 d.
The Papists Bait, or, The way to get Proselytes, by Ch. Gataker, *B.D.* 1 s.
Dr. Du Moulin *against the Lord* Castlemain 6 d.
A Journey into the Country, being a Dialogue between an English Protestant Physician, and an English Papist.
Friendly and seasonable Advice to the Roman Catholicks of England, *in* twelves 6 d.

FINIS.